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# WHAT IS ARMAGEDDON?



By LOUIS F. WERE

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By Louis F. Were



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## FOREWORD

This brief outline has been prepared in order that my fellow-workers may have an opportunity of giving study to some of the reasons for my belief concerning "Armageddon."

It is my regret that the size of this booklet could not be enlarged so as to include many other features—all of which show that the belief of a gathering of the nations to Megiddo in Palestine is not what is taught, either directly or indirectly, by Rev. 16: 12-16. The prophet had no such thought in mind when he penned the inspired words.

The teaching that there is to be a gathering of nations to Megiddo in Palestine is based upon a misunderstanding of the Scriptural passages involved. This view of a literal gathering of nations has been responsible for much political speculation as to the supposed alignment of the nations at the coming battle of Armageddon, which it has been taught will occur on the plain of Esdraelon.

There is a certain fascination, which is pleasing to the "natural" senses, in moving nations about on the chessboard of human deductions, in trying to work out the details of the final battle of the nations at "Armageddon." This theory has caused some to even prophesy how things would come about. As the years roll by these predictions, one by one, have been, and will be, proven untrue. The writer could give specific instances, but that is unnecessary, as most of the readers of these lines will remember more than one of these unfortunate attempts at reading into the prophecies what God did not place there. In the light of Deut. 18: 22 we should be provoked to a more thorough study of "Armageddon."

An unbiased examination of the **causes** of these false predictions, which bring in political speculations, will reveal that they are the fruitage of the theories concerning the supposed alignment of the nations for the coming "Armageddon." This is the tap-root that needs to be cut out, and when that is done the evil tree will naturally die.

It is not a matter of **which** theory of the gathering of the nations to Megiddo in Palestine is right, for they are all variations of **the same basic error**. God's Word, rightly understood, does not predict a gathering of nations to Megiddo, to Jerusalem, or to any other specific **literal** place for war, or for any other purpose in connection with "Armageddon"—until the end of the millennium, when the unsaved gather around the New Jerusalem. It is possible that in the future Palestine will be the battlefield for contending nations, as has been the case down through the ages. But in fulfilment of such predictions as Matt. 24: 6-8; Rev. 11: 18, so many countries of the world have been the theatres of war, that it would be surprising if Palestine escaped the horrors of world-embracing wars. However, whatever wars may be fought in Palestine in the future, they will not be the "Armageddon" of Rev. 16: 12-16. **All** theories which are propounded with a literal gathering to Palestine as their basis will be proved untrue by the march of events. Such beliefs are based upon "unfortunate" interpretations of God's Word and are misconceptions of the prophecies involved. The unfolding of

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events will prove that the positions set forth herein are founded upon the true principles of prophetic exegesis.

There are certain principles of Biblical understanding which enabled me over a decade ago to state with confidence that the unfolding of events would prove my position correct. Now, after applying those principles of interpretation to the Word of God for many years, I can repeat with increasing confidence: "the unfolding of events will prove that my position is based upon **Scriptural** principles of the interpretation of the prophecies concerning 'Armageddon'." This booklet does not set forth all the reasons for my position on the "Armageddon" issues, nor does it do justice to the presentation of the vast amount of evidence which could be given from the Scripture and the Spirit of Prophecy.

But, whatever passage of Scripture is concerned, or from whatever angle the subject is studied, all the evidence shows **clearly** that the teaching of a literal conflict of nations at Megiddo in "Armageddon" is based upon a misunderstanding of the prophecy of Rev. 16: 12-16—a misunderstanding which has come about because certain Biblical **principles** of interpretation have not been applied.

It is Satan's method to blind eyes to the true interpretation by means of a false interpretation. (See 2 Cor. 4: 4; etc.) Because of this fact it is necessary that God's people should have the proper understanding of "Armageddon."

I trust this outline will serve to stimulate study into a fuller meaning of the Third Angel's Message and its relation to the three powers, namely, the Beast, the False Prophet, and the Dragon, who are pictured, by the Revelator, as being the actors in the closing drama of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. This great "Armageddon"—"the great conflict in which all the world will act a part"—involves every person upon the planet, and this is the truth which we have been commissioned to bear as an integral part of the Third Angel's Message. There are reasons for believing that the idea of a literal conflict of nations at Megiddo, in Palestine, is a part of the Futuristic system which, as you know, turns minds away from the true interpretation of the prophecies which concern the Third Angel's Message.

Personally, I do not believe that anyone knows what the nations, militarily, will do in the future. That wars in general will rage until the end of time we can be confident, but of anything specific concerning the various nations only the Infinite God knows. What the nations will do in the ecclesiastical world is what we are told by Divine revelation.

My prayer is that you will make the thoughts herein presented a matter of earnest, careful, and prayerful study.

L. F. WERE.

Adelaide, S.A.

August 21st, 1942.

"Prove all things."—1 Thess. 5: 21.

"He that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him."—Proverbs 18: 13.

"Who ever knew truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?"—Milton.

## CONTENTS

	Pages
Are Japan and China and other "Eastern" Nations the "Heathen" of Joel 3? ....	7-10
What is Armageddon? ....	11-33
The Old Testament source of the Phraseology used in John's description of the Overthrow of Spiritual Babylon ....	34-36
What the Spirit of Prophecy teaches concerning Armageddon ....	37-44
The Spirit of Prophecy and the Drying up of the Waters of the Euphrates ....	45-50
An Illustration from Isa. 8: 7, 8 of the Flooding and Drying up of the Waters of the Euphrates ....	50-53
The Drying up of the Waters of the Euphrates and the French Revolution ....	54-56
Should the Application of the Euphrates in Rev. 9 to the Ottoman Empire determine the Interpretation of the Euphrates in Rev. 16? ....	57-60
The Triple Application of the Prophecies pertaining to Israel, and the Points of the Compass mentioned in the Predictions concerning Israel. "Christ is the Centre of all True Doctrine." CT. 453 ....	61-70
What Occurs when the King of the North comes to his end? ....	70-71
Satan's Futurism centred in Palestine—Opposes the Third Angel's Message, which throws Light upon Palestinian Prophecies ....	72-78
Will Satan be crowned as Christ at Jerusalem, and thus occasion the Gathering of the Nations to Palestine, followed by Armageddon? ....	79-85



## ARE JAPAN AND CHINA AND OTHER "EASTERN" NATIONS THE "HEATHEN" OF JOEL 3?

The answer to this question is vital to the understanding of certain Bible prophecies. However, care must be exercised to be sure that the interpretation is Biblical, and not man-made.

The Bible speaks very frequently about the "heathen," and if this designation belongs to the people east of Palestine, then these eastern nations play an important part in the Bible.

It has been said that the prophecy of Joel 3 pertains to the coming of the nations of the East to participate in the holocaust of Armageddon around Jerusalem, but a careful study of the issues involved readily proves the falsity of this belief.

The authorised version does read: "Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye **heathen**, and gather yourselves together round about . . . Let the **heathen** be awakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the **heathen** round about." vs. 11-12. There are too many theories founded upon a superficial reading of the Holy Scriptures, and these easily-made and hence hastily-formed ideas are Satan's smoke screen to cover up the real interpretation.

One does not have to go outside of the book of Joel to find the answer to our question. In Joel 2:17, 19, we read: "Let the priests . . . say, Spare Thy people, O Lord, and give not Thine heritage to reproach, that the **heathen** should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, where is their God?" In v. 19 is also found this statement from God: "And I will no more make you a reproach among the **heathen**." Does anyone contend that in the days of Joel the Japanese or the Chinese were ruling the Israelites? Or that the Jews were a reproach among these Eastern nations? We read nowhere in Scripture about the Japanese or Chinese ruling the Jews, or of in some particular sense ruling the church. A theory that will not stand up to the very simplest test in God's word is certainly not of God.

As Japan and China are not intended in Joel 2: 17, 19, why should the same people in Joel 3 mean Japan and China?

The most trifling reading of the chapter reveals the crudities of the belief that Joel 3 pertains to the "heathen" nations of Japan and China. Joel 3:2 reads: "I will also gather **all nations**, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land." The word "**nations**" is from the same Hebrew word as "heathen," and if the Japanese and Chinese are meant in verses 11, 12, then this applies only to them in verse 2, which, of course, is utterly absurd.

The Japanese or the Chinese did not scatter Israel, and certainly did not "part" the land of Palestine. "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles" says v. 9. But the word "Gentiles" is from the same original word as "nations" and "heathen," and the very context reveals that this proclamation is not something which merely pertains to Japan and China, or to any Eastern nations any more than nations to the west of Palestine. Verses 3-8 of chapter 3 show that Joel does not have a thought about Japan or China, or nations particularly to the east of Palestine.

In Ephes. 2:11, 12, we have the inspired interpretation of the word "Gentiles"—"that ye bring in time past Gentiles in the flesh . . . that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

This God-given interpretation clearly states that the word "Gentiles" refers to those who do not belong to the true Israel—to those who have not entered into covenant relation with God, the sign of which is the Sabbath. Ex. 31: 13-17.

As this is God's explanation of the word "Gentiles," it behoves us when reading such predictions as Joel 3, to interpret what we read therein in the light of God's own explicit revelation.



In Rev. 11:2 we read: "But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the **Gentiles**, and the holy city shall **they** tread underfoot forty and two months." We all know that this prediction was fulfilled during the days of Papal supremacy. The comment in *Great Controversy*, p. 266, shows how the Papal power trod underfoot the holy city; "that is, the true church," by persecuting spiritual Israel. But the point to be emphasised is that the ecclesiastical strength of the apostate church with its persecuting forces in Europe—not east but west of Palestine—are specifically stated to be "**Gentiles**." That is, Gentiles, or "heathen," are thus designated as enemies of the church—spiritual Israel—as the Gentiles, or "heathen," were enemies of national Israel in the days of the old covenant.

The Gentiles, or the heathen, in the Old Testament were the enemies of the national people of God; the Gentiles, or the heathen, in the New Testament are the spiritual enemies of spiritual Israel, and have not the slightest direct reference to Japan or China, or of nations to the east of Palestine.

The theory under consideration is a figment of human imagination, and would never have seen the light of day save for bolstering up a wrong conception of prophetic exposition. A mere perusal of the use of the words "heathen," "nations," "Gentiles," which are from the same Hebrew word, in Joel reveals the faulty foundation of the fanciful theory concerning the gathering of Japan and China around Jerusalem. The reference made by Jesus to this prophecy of Joel reveals the utter falsity of the worldly interpretation of God's Sacred Word. In Matt. 25:32, Christ pictures the judgment scenes which are prefigured in Joel's prophecy, and He says: "And before Him shall be gathered **all nations**." It is very evident that Christ's coming to judge "**all nations**," which, of course, is precisely what Joel 3 also says, is not a prediction of Christ coming to merely judge the Japanese and the Chinese. As we all know, that Judgment is for all people—"all nations"—and that being so, any attempt to interpret Joel 3 in terms of Japan or China, or of all the nations to the east of Palestine, is seen at a glance to be a most unfortunate interpretation, which serves only to blind the eyes of people in all the world that all are to be judged at the second coming of Christ.

Lev. 25:44, 2 Kings 17:15 speaks of "the heathen round" the Jews. "Round" about, of course, does not mean to the "east." In fact, one only needs to use a concordance and notice the way in which the word "heathen" is employed right throughout God's Holy Word to see how utterly foreign to Scripture is the interpretation of that word in Joel 3 in reference to the "Eastern" nations.

It was the "heathen" whose place the Jews took in Palestine. These were not Japanese or Chinese, or those now known as "Eastern" nations.

The Bible says: "the **heathen** whom the Lord cast out before the children of Israel." See 2 Kings 17:11; 21:2; 2 Chron. 28:3; 33:2, 9; etc. We are not left to conjecture what "heathen" or "nations" are referred to, for they are mentioned by name in so many passages of Scripture. See Ex. 3:8, 17; etc. The Japanese or Chinese are not even remotely hinted at, as the heathen in whose land Israel settled.

When David prayed: "Deliver us from the **heathen** that we may give thanks to Thy holy name" he is not praying for deliverance from two Oriental nations, but from any nation whether east or west of Palestine. When Nehemiah (Neh. 5:8) spoke of "the Jews which were sold unto the **heathen**," and of "the **heathen** our enemies," v. 9, and also of "the **heathen** that are about us," v. 17, he did not have the slightest reference to the Japanese or Chinese. By turning to the about 150 times the word "heathen" occurs in Scripture, we see that the word is employed when speaking of nations and peoples north, south, east and west of Palestine—it is used in Scripture to designate nations who were not Israelites and who were the enemies of Israel. Dr. Strong's definition of "Goy" or "Goyim," in the plural, is: "A foreign nation—hence a Gentile . . . Gentiles, heathen, nation, people." The Greek word which is the equivalent to the Hebrew Goy, is "Ethnos," this according to Dr. Strong's definition is: "A race, a tribe, specifically a foreign (non-Jewish) one . . . Gentile, heathen, nation, people." These words are employed about 700 times in the Scripture, and are translated about 150 times "heathen," 411 times "nation," 112 "Gentiles," 13 times "people."

In the study of the Bible one must take care not to give a forced interpretation. This bad practice comes through not using the Bible as its own expositor, but of giving what the Bible terms "private interpretations." 2 Pet. 1:20.

Dr. A. T. Pierson has well said: "There is not a form of evil doctrine or practice that may not claim apparent sanction and support from **isolated passages**; but nothing erroneous or vicious can even find countenance from the Word of God, when the **whole united testimony of Scripture** is weighed against it . . . only careful comparison will show the complete mind of God."

The Westminster Confession declares: "The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is **the Scripture itself**. . . . It must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly."

Dr. Angus states: "A Scripture truth is the really consistent explanation of **all that Scripture teaches** in reference to the question examined." Another Christian writer has said: "Investigate, **compare Scripture with Scripture**, sink the shaft of truth down deep into the mine of God's Word." T.M. 476, 106.

And so when we abide by this heaven-sent counsel we will obtain the truth of God and not the imagination of men.

The prophets speak very frequently about Israel, and the heathen, and they make it clear that the "heathen" are the enemies of Israel. Ezekiel, who so often writes of the "heathen," says that the Israelites were captive in the lands of the heathen. At one time, he says that the Israelites were captives in the lands of the heathen, and then his alternative expressions are: "their enemies' land," "into the hand of their enemies," "Captivity among the heathen." See Ezek. 38:16; 39:21, 23, 27, 28, etc.

In Joel 3, as we have already seen, the heathen are the nations; the non-Israelites; the enemies of the people of God. When Jesus quoted from the prophecy of Joel in respect to His second advent, He used the words "heathen," "nations," "Gentiles" mentioned in Joel's vision of the judgment, as the designation of the people of the whole world, and particularly of the unprepared. The heathen or nations **smitten** in the threshing process pictured in Joel 3:14, margin, are the same nations **smitten** in Rev. 19: 15; Zech. 12:4; 14:12; Ezek. 39:3, 21, 23, etc.

In Micah 5:15 we read: "I will execute **vengeance** in anger and fury upon the heathen." The comment of the Variorum Bible is "**Nations** which have not been obedient." That is, God will "execute vengeance" upon all disobedient nations whether north, south, east or west of Palestine. This truth is made clear by the New Testament comment found in Jude 14, 15: "The Lord cometh with ten thousands of His saints to **execute judgment upon all**, and to convince **all that are ungodly**." To this agrees Paul's inspired testimony in 2 Thess. 1:7-9: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire **taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel** of our Lord Jesus Christ." The **vengeance** which Micah declares will be executed "upon the **heathen**" the New Testament writers state will be executed "upon **all**" who **reject the gospel**, either by neglect or by wilful rebellion. In other words, the Holy Spirit interprets the meaning of the Old Testament term "heathen" as referring to all outside of Christ.

In the Book of Obadiah, verses 1 and 2, God says that the Edomites, who lived between Palestine and Egypt, were "**among the heathen**." In v. 16 Obadiah says that "the heathen . . . shall be as though they had not been." Other Bible writers show how this is to be true of all the unsaved.

The interpretation which makes the "heathen" mentioned in the prophecies refer to Japan and China is seen in its crudities when we compare Ps. 2 with Acts 4:25-27. In Ps. 2 we read: "Why do the **heathen** rage, and why do the **people** imagine a vain thing? The **kings of the earth** set themselves, and the **rulers** take counsel together against the Lord, and against His anointed." Later, the Psalmist gives a conversation between God and His Son, Jesus: "Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the **heathen** for Thine inheritance, and the **uttermost parts of the earth** for Thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Here we see that the heathen mean people opposed to God and His Son—without any



suggestion of any direction of the compass. This becomes all the more apparent by observing the way these verses from the 2nd Psalm are quoted in Acts 4:25-27. The Church of Jesus was being persecuted, and the members found consolation in the knowledge that their Master before them had suffered from the hands of His enemies. After quoting the verses from the 2nd Psalm concerning the enmity of the heathen against God and His Son, the church declared: "For of a truth against Thy Holy Child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the **Gentiles**, and the people of Israel, were gathered together." The heathen, or Gentiles, which are here mentioned as fulfilling the 2nd Psalm, were not from the east of Palestine—to the contrary, the Romans were from the west!

It is when we compare Scripture with Scripture that we obtain the truth of the Bible. And so we notice that what the 2nd Psalm says of Christ breaking "**the heathen**" with a rod of iron (Ps. 2:8, 9) is said in Rev. 12:5 to be "**all nations**" and in Rev. 19:15 "**the nations**." In Rev. 2:26, 27 the triumph of Christ over the heathen mentioned in Ps. 2 is applied to the triumph of the Church. So once again we see that the "heathen" of the Scripture are those who are the enemies of God, Christ, and His Church, wherever they may be found on the planet, and it is utterly incongruous to interpret certain predictions as if they foretold the doom merely of Japan and China, or people living to the east of Palestine, because the word "heathen" is employed in the prophecies.

In Acts 15:12-17 we find an account of the "miracles and wonders God had wrought among the **Gentiles** by" Paul and Barnabas. James, in his presidential address, shows how this work accomplished by Paul and others among the Roman and Grecian Gentiles was the fulfilment of the prophecy of Amos 9:11, 12, where the "**heathen**" are the ones predicted to be blessed in the spiritual conquests of God's Israel. Here is another example of how the Holy Spirit interprets the meaning of the word "**heathen**," namely, as a term describing those who were not Israelites, without the slightest specific reference to the east of Jerusalem.

In 2 Cor. 11:26 Paul states that he was "in perils by the **heathen**." He does not mean that he was in peril among the Japanese. As a matter of fact Paul's travels were northward and westward, and certainly not to Japan or China! Paul's preaching "**among the heathen**" mentioned in Gal. 1:16 is set forth in Gal. 2:9 in contrast to the other disciples' preaching among the Jews. This shows the Bible use of the word "heathen"—it meant those not Israelites.

In matters of Church discipline, Christ gave instructions regarding disfellowshipping one living in sin. "But if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an "**heathen man**." Matt. 18:17. This surely is not intended that we should regard a disfellowshipped believer as a Japanese, or a Chinaman, or an Easterner—no, but as a non-Christian, and that, too, since the rejection of the Jewish nation, without the slightest relation to Palestine.

It is a misapplication of Scripture to make the heathen of the prophecies refer to Eastern nations—there is nothing to warrant such teachings, and the term would not be used except to bolster up some erroneous theory regarding the coming of the Eastern nations to Palestine to participate in the battle of Armageddon. Wherein our views of Armageddon cause us to misinterpret Scripture, we had better adjust our views to harmonise with the inspired Word. God does not desire any form of deception in the promulgation of His Gospel.

The view that the "heathen" is a term used in Scripture to designate those out of Christ, or the enemies of God's people, is completely sustained by the writings of God's servant, as may be seen by looking up the passages where the term is employed.

For examples see Early Writings, pp. 282-284, and the Great Controversy, pp. 618, 635, where "heathen" is the word employed in referring to **the enemies of the church** in all the world, and **without any relation to Palestine**. As God has thus given us His interpretation of His Holy Word, it is incumbent upon us to heed the heavenly counsel and to change our interpretation so as to be in harmony with God. Our only safety lies in following the way the Holy Spirit leads through His inspired servants. Interpretations, based upon a superficial reading of the prophecies, which are made by man to fit in with some theory regarding Armageddon will, in the end, prove to be folly and deceit. Far better it would be to harmonise our ideas of the final conflict with other revealed teachings of Scripture, than for us to bend the Word of God to fit in with our views of Armageddon.

## WHAT IS ARMAGEDDON?

In this brief outline it is impossible to do justice to all features involved in the study of this important theme. The following are a few of the factors which have to be considered: **When** is this battle predicted to occur? **Who** are the **participants**? Is Armageddon employed in the Revelation **literally** or symbolically? Does the **drying** up of the **waters of the Euphrates** have a **literal** or **symbolical** meaning? If the Euphrates has a symbolical meaning, would it be consistent to give Armageddon a **literal** application? What **type of prophecy** is involved? How would an application of Rev. 16: 12-16 affect our understanding of other parallel parts of the Word of God? **For whom** were written the facts concerning the coming conflict? And **why** were they written?

As to **when** Armageddon is fought Rev. 16: 14 says that it is "**the battle of that great day of God Almighty**." Space will not permit producing the proof that it does not come until the door of mercy is shut and the day of wrath has come. The expression "**that great day of God**" refers to that time so often referred to in the Bible when Christ no longer mediates between God and men; that time when He ceases to be the High Priest in the heavenly courts. The great time of trouble to which Daniel 12: 1 directs our attention is there stated to come when Jesus has completed the work of salvation. Armageddon comes at the end of that short period which elapses between Christ rising and closing the door of mercy and His actual coming in the clouds of heaven. Study in this connection the following texts: Rev. 22: 11, 12; 3: 7; compare Rev. 10: 7 and Rev. 11: 15-18; Luke 13: 25; Matt. 25: 10-12; Gen. 6: 3; 7: 1, 4, 16; Amos 8: 11, 12; etc.

Armageddon comes at the end of the period of trouble, during which no salvation is available—**consequently this present war cannot be Armageddon**.

The Bible predicts that wars and troubles will grow in extent and intensity until Jesus comes to end the reign of sin. Matt. 24: 6-8; Rev. 11: 18; etc. In our study of the Word of God we are safe so long as we confine our interpretations to the fulfilments of prophecy among the nations generally in the world, **but when we endeavour to set forth an alignment of what the different nations of the world are going to do, as they are supposed to gather at Megiddo, in Palestine, we immediately step on to the ground of human speculation, which is based upon a misunderstanding of those verses which pertain to the church.**

Only space prevents producing the vast amount of irrefutable evidence to prove this statement. The Bible was written to explain the plan of salvation centred in Jesus, the world's Redeemer. And it is right here that error has come about. In the old Testament the plan of redemption was set forth in the Jewish economy. Then God reigned in the Temple of Jerusalem. In the New Testament (after Christ's death and the withdrawal of God's presence from the Temple at Jerusalem) the church is the dwelling place of God. See 1 Cor. 6: 16; 2 Cor. 6: 16; Ephes. 2: 21, 22; etc.

This fact is vitally important to the understanding of Armageddon. In the days of ancient Israel the enemies of God gathered to destroy Israel, and in so doing they gathered to fight God, Who reigned within the Temple in their midst. Since God's rejection of national Israel, the church—spiritual Israel—stands in its place, and the Old Testament prophetic forecasts of enemies attacking Israel now apply to the church. So that the prodigious army of the combined forces of the enemies of Israel pictured in Ezek. 38, 39, as gathering from the four quarters to attack Israel are to be led by Satan to attack God, Who is "**in the midst of My people Israel**," that is the church. Ezek. 39: 7; 43: 7; etc. This vast gathering of people under the leadership of Gog either gather against **literal** or **spiritual** Israel. **Settle that**



question, and the question of the gathering to Armageddon is automatically settled; for if space permitted it could be abundantly proved that the imagery employed in the description of Armageddon is partly based upon Ezek. 38, 39. Both refer to the great conflict in which Israel—the church—is involved.

The New Testament writers always regard the church as having taken the place of national Israel, and applies Old Testament references to national Israel in connection with the church—spiritual Israel. In proof of this many pages of scriptural proof could be presented. The New Testament can only be thoroughly grasped as one sees that the basis of its teaching is that national Israel had given way to spiritual Israel, which has inherited all of the promises and blessings assured to Israel. Note the following extracts taken from esteemed Bible commentators:—

"Those who put their trust in Jesus constitute the true Israelites, the new, the Messianic Israel, who have been obedient to God and to his Messiah. . . . Hence the believers in Jesus are the true people of God, the possessors of all the privileges which had once belonged to Israel after the flesh." "The People of God," by H. F. Hamilton, D.D., Vol. I., Preface, p. 7.

Vol. II., p. 28, chapter "The New Israel":—

"All that belonged to the Israel of the old now belonged to the new; what was true to the pre-Messianic Israel was true of the post-Messianic Israel."

"We are the community of the Messiah, and therefore the true Israelites. In this one sentence is summed up the whole philosophy of the foundation of the church. . . . But the new Israel not only inherited all the exclusive privileges of the old, it also had received yet greater blessings through the Messiah." Ibid. p. 31.

In his "The Revelation of St. John," p. 27, Prof. W. Milligan, D.D., has written of the church: "She had an interest in Zion and Jerusalem; she saw in Babylon the type of her enemies; she felt herself to be the Israel of God."

T. W. Christie, B.A., in his book, "The Book of Revelation," p. 329, says: "All those names, 'Abraham,' 'children of promise,' with their attendant country, promises, and blessings, belonged not to Israel after the flesh, but to the Israel of God."

Note the following from Ellicott's Commentary, notes on Revelation: "The Christian Church absorbs the Jewish, inherits her privileges, and adopts, with wider and nobler meaning, her phraseology." p. 96.

"The historical basis of the Apocalypse is the past history of the chosen people; God's dealings with men always follow the same lines. The Apocalypse shows us the principle working in higher levels and in a wider arena. The Israel of God, the church of Christ, takes the place of the national Israel." (p. 125.)

Matthew Henry's Commentary in his notes on Joel 3, says: "The saints are the true Israel of God, they are His people, the church is His Jerusalem."

And so have written many of the old, spiritual commentators. The writer of "The Ministry of Healing," p. 405, says:

"We are numbered with Israel. All the instruction given to the Israelites of old concerning the education and training of the children, all the promises of blessings through obedience are for us."

This fact is clearly taught in the New Testament, but space is so limited that the reader can only be directed to the following verses:—Matt. 21: 43; 1 Pet. 2: 9; Rom. 2: 28, 29; 9: 6-8; Gal. 3: 7-9; Ephes. 2: 11-19; etc.

So that from the light shining out of the pages of the New Testament we know that the pictured assault of the combined army of the enemies of Israel brought to view in Ezek. 38, 39 applies to an attack to be made upon spiritual Israel. It could not be otherwise and the Bible be consistent. National Israel dropped out of those prophetic pictures of victory for Israel over her enemies when God rejected them as His chosen nation. Spiritual Israel then takes the place of national Israel. The church is now the "holy nation" (1 Pet. 2: 9)—the "nation bringing forth the

fruits" in God's vineyard (Matt. 21: 43). So that the picture of Israel being attacked by powerful enemies in Ezek. 38, 39 will find its application in the history of the church. And it is precisely in this way that the Revelation brings the scenes depicted in Ezek. 38, 39 into the imagery of the final conflict of Armageddon. Rev. 19: 17, 18 is a quotation from Ezek. 39: 4, 17-20. Rev. 20: 8 is also a reference to the prophecy of Ezek. 38, 39. Gog and Magog are brought to view in Rev. 20: 8 as the enemies of Christ and His church—and that is what they refer to in Ezek. 38, 39. Rev. 16: 16 is also partly taken from the scene of the destruction of Gog's armies on the mountains of Israel (Ezek. 39: 4). Christ, in the Revelation, refers us back to the picture presented in Ezekiel's vision for the fuller picture of the destruction of the enemies of Israel—the church. The burial place for Israel's enemies is pictured as being in a valley to the east of the Mediterranean Sea (Ezek. 39: 11). This is stated by commentators, who have given considerable study to the topographical, geographical, and historical features of Ezekiel's description, to be a reference to Megiddo. Hence the slaughter of Israel's enemies on "the mountains of Israel" is the basis of the first part of the word "Armageddon," for "Har" in the Hebrew, to which our attention is directed in Rev. 16: 16, means "a mountain." And because the burial of Gog's mighty army is pictured in Ezekiel's vision as being at Megiddo (already mentioned in Judges 4 and 5 as the place of the defeat of Israel's enemies) Jesus, in Rev. 16: 16, connects up the two features of Mountain and Megiddo as one word—"Armageddon—the Mountain of Megiddo." Megiddo itself means "slaughter" or "destruction," hence the appropriateness of the use of the name in this description of the overthrow of the enemies of Christ and His true Israel.

In his "The Book of Revelation," p. 272, on Rev. 16: 12-16, William Milligan, D.D., says:—

"Why Har-Megedon? There was, we have reason to believe, no such place. The name is symbolical."

Notice the following from Watson's Bible Dictionary:—

"Armageddon, a place spoken of Rev. 16: 16, which literally signifies 'The mountain of Mageddon' or 'Megiddo.' . . . The word Armageddon . . . does not signify any particular place, but that it is used in allusion to Megiddo mentioned in Judges 5: 19, where Barak overcame Sisera with his great army, and where Josiah was slain (2 Kings 28: 30). If so, the term must have been a proverbial one of destruction and mourning."

In the Revelation there are used hundreds of expressions which can only be understood as one turns back to the history, or prophecies, of Israel brought to view in the Old Testament. The reference to the "place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" in Rev. 16: 16 reminds the reader of Revelation that the use of the Hebrew tongue shows that it pertains to God's Israel—and, as we have already seen, it points us to the prophecy of the defeat of the enemies of the church upon the mountains of Israel. The Apocalyptic reference, of course, takes away the thought of literal Palestine, for the New Testament lifts the old, national things of Israel into the realm of the church. What was at one time limited to Palestine, when the rule of the national applied, is now lifted into the world-wide sphere—as is done in the New Testament with all of Israel's matters. The destruction of the enemies of the church will be world-wide.

Most of the old godly commentators stated that Ezek. 38, 39 portrayed the combination of Satanic forces against the church. The comment in Brown's Bible is:—

"There will never be wanting multitudes to assemble against Christ's church."

"The Annotated Paragraph Bible" says:—

"The triumphs of the church of Christ, and the overthrow of its enemies, are represented by the destruction of vast armies from the extreme north and south . . . the consummation of the great conflict . . . between the kingdoms of God and of Satan in the world."



In his "The Book of Revelation," pp. 352, 353, T. W. Christie, B.A., says:—"But what are those simple truths of those chapters of Ezek. 38, 39, and embodied in the spiritual vision of John? . . . They are those **figurative illustrations** of spiritual truths **relating to the church of God and its enemies**, down to the last conflict. . . . Ezekiel, as a prophet of Israel, used the **enemies of the nation Israel as typical of the foes of the spiritual Israel.**"

The following extract is from Hengstenberg's Commentary, on Ezekiel, page 329:—

"The dogmatic idea of the prophecy is very simple. The **community of God** renewed by His grace, **will victoriously resist all the assaults of the world.**"

On p. 330 we read: "The comprehensive character of the prophecy appears especially in v. 5, 6, 13. Nations from the most diverse countries, without national connection, unite in an expedition against Israel. **The attempt at historical explanation here at once proves vain.** The description has a Utopian character. The prophet fetches from the ends of the earth whatever can be raised of formidable heathen powers, or hitherto unknown terrors. He sets aside all bounds and limits in which all historically understood events are involved. . . . The Apocalypse destroys also the appearance of a historical character, inasmuch as it at once identifies Gog and Magog with the heathen in the four ends of the earth. . . . This is explained only when under Gog and Magog are concealed **the enemies of the community of God.**"

From "The Scriptural Gazeteer" we quote: "The terms Gog and Magog are used **figuratively as representing the vast hordes of the Lord's adversaries led by Satan.**"

Isbion T. Beckwith, Ph.D., D.D., in his "The Apocalypse of John," p. 288, says: "Gog and Magog, in which are embraced under a **symbolic name all the tribes of men hostile to God.**"

See also Dr. Angus's "Bible Handbook," p. 288, and many other authorities.

Of the followers of Gog, Rev. 20: 8 says: "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea." Ezek. 38: 6, 7, 9 refers to the great numbers in the army of Gog to attack Israel. In Ezek. 39: 12 we read: "And there shall they bury Gog and **all his multitude**; and they shall call it the valley of Hamon-Gog." The margin gives the meaning of this name as, "**The multitude of Gog.**" See also v. 15. The emphasis upon "multitude" is also brought to view in v. 16. See also Joel 3: 14.

Speaking of the burial place of Gog's army, Hengstenberg's Commentary says: "The valley of Megiddo is in no doubt meant, to which this description eminently applies."

After giving particulars concerning the location of the grave of Gog and his mighty army, as pictured in Ezek. 39, he says:

"All the three marks which the prophet gives suits Megiddo. In all probability, Legio, now Lejun, the modern name of Megiddo, is derived from our passage. **Legio** corresponds to the great **multitude** here."

When Jesus asked the evil spirit his name, "he answered, saying, My name is **Legion**, for we are **many.**" (Mark 5: 9; Luke 8: 30.) Evil spirits, which are very numerous, will lead to their doom the **multitudes** of the enemies of God and Israel at the **anti-typical** Megiddo. Armageddon is a **coined** word, coupling together the **mountains** of Israel, where, in Ezek. 38, 39, the enemies of Israel were pictured as being destroyed, and the burial place of "**the multitude of Gog**" at Megiddo—already well-known in Bible history as the place of the defeat of devil-led forces; and the place proverbial for destruction, bitter mourning, and lamentation. (2 Kings 23: 29, 30; Zech. 12: 11.)

Regarding the battle at Megiddo, in which King Josiah was mortally wounded, Smith's Bible Dictionary, art. Megiddo, says:

"This calamity made a deep and permanent impression on the Jews. Thus, in the language of the prophet Zechariah (12: 11), 'the **mourning** of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon' becomes the poetic expression for the **deepest and most despairing** grief; as in the Apocalypse (Rev. 16: 16) Armageddon, in **continuance of the same imagery** is represented as the scene of terrible and final conflict."

That Armageddon is mentioned in the Revelation "in continuance of the same **imagery**," and not as a **literal** place, is obvious when viewed from every angle. It is mentioned "as the scene of terrible and final conflict" between the forces of good and evil—then in that universal overthrow of evil the unsaved will **mourn** (Rev. 1: 7; Matt. 24: 30; Rev. 6: 14-17; etc.) with "the deepest and most despairing grief."

"Armageddon" means "**Mount Megiddo**," and if we only consider the geography or topography of the term we can see that it is mentioned (in harmony with the many theological factors involved) as a **symbolic** name, for Megiddo is **not a mountain**. In Judges 5: 19-21 we read of Israel's first conflict fought at Megiddo: "Then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the **waters of Megiddo** . . . **the river of Kishon** swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon." Thus Megiddo is brought into the picture of the conflict between Israel and her demon-led (see Deut. 18: 9-14; etc.) enemies as being **in a valley** where flowed the river Kishon—"the waters of Megiddo." In the burial place of Gog's army at Megiddo (which was on the ancient road east of the Mediterranean Sea) Ezek. 39: 11 refers to it as "**the valley** of passengers (var. travellers) on the east of the sea . . . and **there** shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it" "**The valley** of Hamon-gog, or the multitude of Gog." (Margin.)

In 2 Chron. 35: 22 we read of "**the valley** of Megiddo." And again in Zech. 12: 11 we read of "**the valley** of Megiddon." We do not read of "**Mount Megiddo**." Of one thing we can be sure, and that is that **the Word of God does not contradict itself**. How, then, can the apparent discrepancy be satisfactorily explained? Only in this way—the Old Testament references—deal with the **literal** Megiddo in the **valley** by "**the waters of Megiddo** . . . **the river Kishon**"; and the Revelation sets forth the symbolic Megiddo; and as a **symbol** Jesus connects it up with the **mountains of Israel** upon which the vast army of Gog is pictured in Ezek. 38, 39 as being slaughtered, and then **gathered** and buried "**in the valley of Megiddo**"—"a **place** there of graves in Israel . . . on the east of the sea . . . and **there** (at this "**place**") shall they bury Gog and all his multitude: and they shall call it, **The valley** of the multitude of Gog."

Because Gog and his army are destroyed "upon the **mountains** of Israel" (Ezek. 39: 4) and then **gathered** and buried at "**a place** . . . on the east of the sea," (which describes Megiddo in the **valley** along which flows the river Kishon), Rev. 16: 16 combines the "**mountain**" with "**Megiddo**" in the **valley**. Because Gog's burial ground "in the valley of Megiddo" is described in Ezek. 39: 11 as "**a place**," Rev. 16: 16 refers to "**a place** called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."

In Ezek. 34: 13, 14, 15, 26, 28, 31 we read of God's sheep being fed on the mountains of Israel. As the "watchmen of Israel" mentioned by Ezekiel are Gospel ministers, and the **sheep** to whom they minister for Christ, are "**on the mountains of Israel**," the "**mountains of Israel**" are **world-wide**. In that beautiful book on the life of Christ, "The Desire of Ages," pp. 52, 479, Christ, the heavenly Shepherd, is depicted by quoting Ezek. 34: 23, 16, 25, 28. Christ's shepherding of His sheep on "the mountains of Israel" shows that the "**mountains of Israel**" refer to **wherever His church is found**, which is, of course, in all the world. "As an earthly shepherd knows his sheep, so does the Divine Shepherd know **His flock that are scattered throughout the world**. 'Ye are My flock, the flock of My pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord.' (Ezek. 34: 31.) "The Desire of Ages," p. 479.

In "The Acts of the Apostles," pp. 9, 10, we notice how explicit is the author regarding the spiritual, world-wide meaning of the prophecies concerning Israel and "the mountains of Israel." The comment on Ezek. 34: 26, 29-31 reads: "Many and wonderful are the promises recorded in the Scriptures **regarding the church.**"

In the coming conflict deliverance will be found "**in Mount Zion**." See Joel 2: 32; Dan. 12: 1; etc. **Zion**, in the New Testament interpretation, refers to the church—compare Joel 2: 32 with Rom. 10: 13; Isa. 28: 16 with 1 Pet. 2: 6-8; Isa. 59: 20 with Rom. 11: 26; etc. Jesus referred to His church as "**a city that is set on a hill**." (Matt. 5: 14.) The remnant who, in Joel 2: 32, are said to find deliverance in the final struggle between the forces of good and evil, are the same remnant who are referred to in Rev. 12: 17 to be the special objects of **Satanic** hatred in the



final conflict (or "war" or "controversy") over the law of God. This remnant is pictured in Rev. 14: 1 as being "with" the "Lamb . . . on **Mount Zion**." When the earthly powers "give their power and strength unto the beast" and "shall make war with the Lamb," this "remnant" of the church will stand nobly "with" Christ—"They that are **with** Him are called, and chosen, and faithful." (Rev. 17: 14.) They will stand on Mount Zion with Jesus, their Lord and King, when the forces of earth under the control of evil spirits make "war with the Lamb." The Christian church was portrayed by the beautiful imagery of the vision of the huge temple and city in the "holy oblation" in "the land of Israel . . . upon a very **high mountain**." (Ezek. 40: 2; 43: 12.)

In Dr. Clarke's Commentary, the note at the heading of Chapter 40 says: "And we . . . have apostolical authority for the assertion that the **temple and temple worship were emblematic of Christ's church**, frequently represented in the New Testament under the **metaphor of a temple**." The enormous dimensions of this temple portrayed in the closing chapters of Ezekiel have caused many Godly commentators to recognize it as a representation of the Christian church—"upon a very high mountain" "in the land of Israel." Brown Bible comments on Ezek. 42: 15-20: "A magnitude which shows that this does not describe Solomon's temple, nor any of its restorations, nor any temple ever to be literally built, but under architectural emblems, a **spiritual temple**, which will embrace not merely **Mount Zion, the visible church**, but Jerusalem, the potential kingdom."

Scott's Bible says: "This shows that the vision cannot be explained of any temple that has hitherto been built or, indeed, of any literal temple; but **figuratively and mystically**."

Henry's Exposition speaks of, "This **mystical temple . . . signifying the great extent of the church**."

"The dimensions of these visionary buildings being so large (the new temple more spacious than all the old Jerusalem, and the new Jerusalem greater than all the land of Canaan) plainly intimates, as Dr. Lightfoot observes, that **these things cannot be literally, but must be spiritually, understood**."

Space forbids the consideration of all the factors involved in the measurements given in Ezekiel's remarkable vision; it can only be pointed out that the tract of land which was set aside to contain the temple, city, etc., called "the oblation," is said in Ezek. 48: 20 to be 25,000 reeds by 25,000 reeds. Reckoning at the conservative measurement of 10 ft. 6 in. to the reed, 25,000 reeds is about 50 miles.

Brown's Bible says: "Taking the reed at 10½ ft., **this oblation would constitute a square nearly 50 miles on each side**."

Fifty miles on four sides means a distance of 200 miles. In giving the measurements of the New Jerusalem in Rev. 21: 16 John says: And the city lieth **foursquare**, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs." He does not give its measures on each side, but its circuit—or total distance around the four sides. One authority says: "This measure is **the measure of the whole circumference** of the city, and not merely of one side. This appears, from Kitto, to have been **the ancient method of measuring cities**. The **whole circumference** was taken, and that was said to be the measure of the city."

The slaughter of the wicked at Armageddon is pictured by the treading of the winepress of God's wrath—compare Rev. 14: 20; 19: 15. This winepress of God's wrath is "trodden **without the city** . . . by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." One thousand six hundred furlongs makes 200 miles, which is the circuit of the Holy Oblation, where were pictured in Ezekiel's vision of the church, the figure of a mighty temple and city on the "very high mountain" "in the land of Israel." In the Apocalypse Ezekiel's visions are given their spiritual meaning, and the whole of Ezekiel's oblation, and all it contained, are referred to as **God's city**—the church—**outside of which the enemies of the church perish in Armageddon's slaughter**.

As the oblation with the temple and city were pictured in Ezekiel as being upon a "very **high mountain in the land of Israel**," and as that represents the church; and, as in Ezek. 34, God's sheep—the followers of Jesus (the Great Shepherd)—feed in their pastures on "the mountains of Israel" (v. 14), therefore, when Gog comes against "the mountains of Israel" (Ezek. 38: 8); and is to "**fall upon the mountains of Israel**" (39: 4), that means that Gog and his army will perish outside the spiritual oblation situated on the spiritual mountain in the land of Israel. Rev. 19: 17, 18, 21 quotes from Ezek. 39: 17-19 concerning the destruction of Gog and his great army in describing the terrible slaughter of all the enemies of God at the time of the second advent.

The assault of Gog's army pictured in Ezekiel's vision can only mean an attack upon the church. The Revelator portrays in his inspired imagery the fact that before the second coming of Christ the powers controlled by Satan will unite to bring about circumstances of peril to the existence of the church. This uniting, or gathering, of the world's power to overthrow the loyal people of Christ will be frustrated—"these shall make war with the Lamb, and **the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings**." (Rev. 17: 14.)

As only the events associated with the second coming of Christ can be considered at this juncture the application of Rev. 14: 20 to the events after the one thousand years (Rev. 20: 7-9) will not be presented in this very brief outline.

All interpreters of Armageddon would do well to notice the following from "The Apocalypse of John," by Isbon T. Beckwith, Ph.D., D.D., p. 25:

"The use of proper names and designations calls for special notice here. . . . Even the names of the churches . . . are really intended to be **typical** of the whole church. Abaddon, Armageddon, Gog and Magog belong solely to apocalyptic language; and in our book, Babylon, Egypt, Jerusalem, Jezebel, Sion, and Sodom have a **typical** sense only. On p. 648: "Rev. 16: 16, **Harmageddon**. The name here given to the place where Satan's hosts are gathered and where doubtless the battle of Rev. 19: 11 is conceived to occur is **unquestionably purely mystical**. . . . It is **unknown to Hebrew literature**, and it would be **contrary to the Apocalypticist's use of proper names to identify it**, in its eschatological application, with any place so called."

. . . It is an **imaginary name** for designating the scene of the **great battle between Antichrist and the Messiah**. . . . The designation '**Mount Megiddo**' thus derived is open to the objection that the **region is not a mountain, but a vast plain**." Then this noted author connects up the prophecy of Ezek. 38, 39 with Armageddon in the use of the word mountain and the reference to Megiddo "famed in Israel's history as **the place where Jehovah's enemies perished**."

"The great battle of the Messiah with the Antichrist, Rev. 19: 11-21. This prelude (17-18) to the battle is suggested by Ezekiel's prophecy of the assault of the nations upon God's people in the last days, and the overthrow of Gog with his hosts upon the mountains of Israel." (Ibid., p. 734.)

"**Armageddon** . . . It should now be the field of the **last battle** in which the **church** . . . shall be **victorious**." Henry's Commentary.

Many more such extracts could be given to show how widespread is the belief that Armageddon is **not** the name of any **literal** place, but a **symbolic** name comprehending past defeats of Israel's enemies, and referring to the future destruction of the vast army of those who **war against their Maker** and His church.

There is a great "war" on—it has lasted for 6,000 years. One writer refers to this as "**The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan**," or the "conflict," etc. It is this "war" to which the Revelator draws attention in Rev. 12: 7-9. This same "war" is brought to view in Rev. 12: 17. **The dragon that made "war" with Christ in heaven, makes "war" with the woman, or the church**. (Jer. 6: 2; 2 Cor. 11: 2.)

Rev. 12: 17 brings to view "the **remnant of her seed**" as the object of Satan's "wrath" in his "war" against Christ and His church. This means that the Revelation brings us down 6,000 years—commencing with this "war" or "controversy" in heaven between Christ and Satan, and ending on the earth with the remnant of the church the central figure in the final "conflict."



The "war" that commenced in heaven has been in progress upon the earth ever since Satan tempted Adam and Eve to join him in rebellion against their Creator. So successful has Satan been in his campaign against God that "the whole world" has been deceived into fighting God—see Rev. 12: 9. **"The whole world lieth in the wicked one."** 1 John 5: 19 (margin). By our natural birth we are all **enemies of God**. "Know ye not that the friendship of the world is **enmity with God?**" Jas. 4: 4. So contrary are the armies of right and of wrong that God esteems our friendship with the world as proof that we are His enemies.

Speaking of iniquitous Israel the prophet declared: "But they rebelled, and vexed His Holy Spirit: therefore He was turned to be **their enemy, and He fought against them.**" Isa. 63: 10. The apostle Paul often wrote about this "war" or "controversy" between Christ and Satan as shown by the sinfulness of the human heart. "For if, when we were **enemies**, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." Rom. 5:10. In Rom. 7: 14-25 Paul reveals the state of rebellion which is natural to the human heart. Though our better judgment tells us of the folly of wrongdoing we lack the moral strength to shun it. Without Divine aid we shall continue doing evil, which is rebellion against God's pure law. "Because the carnal mind is **enmity against God**: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom. 8: 7. The struggle to obey God is pictured in Gal. 5: 17. When a man endeavours to do the will of God he has to battle against sinful tendencies which war against God. "For the cravings of the lower nature are **opposed** to the Spirit, and the Spirit is opposed to the lower nature, because they are **antagonistic to each other.**" Gal. 5: 17, Weymouth's translation. Ephes. 2: 11, 16 speaks of "the **enmity**" we have in our hearts by nature, which, without Christ, makes us "**aliens** from the commonwealth of Israel." Ephes. 6: 11-18 portrays the "**whole armour**" the Christian must wear in this great "war" of "conflict." "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not **war** after the flesh for the **weapons of our warfare** are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." 2 Cor. 10: 3, 4. "That though mightiest by them **war** a good **warfare.**" 1 Tim. 1: 18. "Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good **soldier** of Jesus Christ. No man that **warreth** entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please Him Who hath chosen him to be a **soldier.**" 2 Tim. 2: 3, 4. The word for "warfare" is that used to describe "military service." Dr. Strong. "Archippus our **fellow-soldier.**" Philemon 3. Christ's followers are said to be soldiers in a warfare.

Jesus is thus set forth as "**the Captain**" of a great army. The church is said to be as "terrible as an **army** with banners." Song of Sol. 6: 10. Jesus is said to be "**the Captain**" of our "salvation." Heb. 2: 10. Those who "were sometimes **alienated** and **enemies** in your mind" are delivered from the army of Satan and are translated "into the **kingdom** of His dear Son" at conversion. Col. 1: 13, 20, 21.

Thus the "war" which the Revelation describes as commencing in heaven between the two armies—of good and of evil—has waged down through the long centuries of human history. But that conflict must end, and that, too, in the final overthrow of Christ's great antagonist. The **finale** of this great controversy or war is what is referred to by the symbolic word "Armageddon." The "battle" mentioned in Rev. 16: 14; 20: 8 comes from the same Greek word "Polemos"—as the "war" of Rev. 12: 7, 17; 13: 7; 19: 19. The "war" of Rev. 13: 4; 17: 14; 19: 11 comes from the Greek "Polemo" (a derivative of "Polemos"), which, according to Dr. Strong, means, "to be engaged in warfare; to fight; to make war." So that with the words "war" or "battle" the same conflict is referred to—the controversy between Christ and Satan.

Some translators use the word "war" in all these references in the Apocalypse. God's arch-enemy—Satan (the word Satan means "**Adversary**") does not want the details of Armageddon understood, for there are factors associated with it which are **important for the church to know—especially when the final scenes are about to take place**; and this feature should be stressed.

There are times when error in prophetic interpretation concerning the future does little harm, because the events mentioned in the prophecy do not constitute "present truth." 2 Pet. 1: 12. There is a proper time to proclaim even a true message. Thus, Jesus warned His disciples not to mention the Mount of Transfiguration experience **until after His resurrection.** Matt. 17: 9. After Peter's affirmation that Jesus was the Son of God, "Then charged He His disciples that they should **tell no man that He**

**was Christ.**" Matt. 16: 20. Other instances could be quoted where Jesus forbade His followers preaching some things which would have been too much for people to believe if they were all presented to them at once. There were truths which **even** the disciples were not prepared to receive. Jesus said to them: "I have **yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.** Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth. . . . He will shew you things to come." John 16: 12, 13. The reason why the disciples were so disappointed by Christ's crucifixion was that they did not understand the prophecies. It was not until the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost that they really understood what Jesus had been endeavouring to tell them, but which they had been too blind to see. They were so filled with their own ideas (which had been inculcated into their minds by the worldly-minded Pharisees) that, until Jesus fulfilled the prophecies which foretold His death and resurrection, and introduced His spiritual kingdom of grace, they did not grasp the import of the prophecies which they previously thought they understood. History will repeat itself. If space permitted it could be amply proved that the same Old Testament prophecies which the Pharisees and the disciples misunderstood are the same ones which those who believe in a literal conflict of the nations in Palestine are misunderstanding to-day.

The truth that He was the Christ, which Jesus forbade His disciples teaching in Matt. 16: 20, was proclaimed with all the power of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost: "Therefore let all the house of Israel **know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ.**" Acts 2: 36. **The time had then come** for that truth to be heralded, **and no power on earth could prevent its proclamation.** Despite misrepresentation, bitterness, and persecution, the truth that Jesus was the Christ—the Messiah—and that in Him were fulfilled the Messianic prophecies found acceptance in honest hearts. Similarly, the time will come when the full truth of Armageddon will be preached as "present truth," and, accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit in the "latter rain" (**which must fall before Armageddon can come**), many who previously thought that it pertained to a conflict between nations at Megiddo, in Palestine, will teach with vigour that it refers to the final conflict of the forces of good and evil. As the call goes forth many thousands will ally themselves with the Lord's army, and march under His flag—"the sign or seal of the living God." Rev. 7: 1-3.

The circumstances of the future will bring prominently before all mankind the actors and factors involved in the final struggle. Matters pertaining to the beast, the false prophet, the mark of the beast, and the seal, or sign, of God will be so forcibly brought before people that, with the power of the Holy Spirit, there will be no doubt in honest hearts as to their personal duty in view of the coming "Armageddon." The beast and the false prophet, on the one hand, will lead the world to "war" against the Ruler of the universe; while Christ, on the other hand, at the head of His church, will lead honest hearts in the final conflict between truth and error. The world's ensign will then be "the mark of the beast," for it is upon this issue that the world will be led to make "war" against God. "And the **beast** was taken, and with him **the false prophet** that wrought miracles before him, with which he **deceived them that had received the mark of the beast.**" Rev. 19: 20. The previous verse describes the combination of the forces of evil to fight against Christ—"the **beast**, and the **kings** of the earth, and their **armies** gathered together **against Him** that sat on the horse, and **against His army.**" (v. 19.) Thus we are plainly told that the coming conflict will be between the two forces—one, the worldly forces of the **beast** and the **false prophet working miracles** in connection with "**the mark of the beast**"; and the other, the army of the Lord marching under "the sign, or seal, of the living God."

**Before Armageddon** comes the world will witness the mightiest demonstration of power that has ever been displayed in the realm of religion. The fearful warning of **the third angel's message**, described in Rev. 14: 9-11, is **yet to be preached "more fully"**—it is a warning to the world not to worship the beast or his image, which is made by the false prophet. See Rev. 13: 11-17. Compare Rev. 13: 13, 14 with Rev. 19: 20. "And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the **beast** and his **image**, and receive his **mark** in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of **the wrath of God**, which is poured into the cup of His indignation." Rev. 14: 9-11.



The false prophet, on the one hand, will work miracles to more firmly establish the mark of the beast; Christ, on the other hand, will endure His church with extraordinary power: "I saw another angel come down from heaven, having **great power**; and the **earth was lightened with his glory**." Rev. 18: 1. Thus by mighty up-surge power the church will call upon all those who are loyal to "the **Captain of their salvation**" to take their stand on the Lord's side under the **banner of the sign or seal of God**; while Satan, through the beast and the false prophet, will work mighty miracles and thus deceive the world to fight against God while marching under the **world's ensign—the mark of the beast**. World conditions are rapidly preparing the way for the final scenes of the great controversy between Christ and Satan, which will end in the complete overthrow of Satan's forces in "Armageddon." It will be **by deception in regard to the mark of the beast that Satan will lead the world to war against God**.

It is, therefore, very important that we understand how to be sure that we are not on the side of God's enemy, but that we are on the Lord's side in truth's triumph hour. Thus Armageddon becomes of the greatest importance to all who would avoid destruction at the hand of God in that tragic hour when the wrath of God will be poured out upon the beast, and the false prophet who, by working miracles, with the aid of "the spirits of devils," will have deceived the world to "war" against God.

**Armageddon is not a national conflict.** The earthly leaders who bring about this struggle are **religious powers**, namely, the **beast and the false prophet**; and their ensign—"the mark of the beast"—is distinctly a religious "mark" or "sign." The "miracles" or "signs" are ecclesiastical, and not military; the "gather" does not refer to a military gathering, as will be explained later. Rev. 16: 13-16 informs us that the **dragon** (see later), the **beast**, and the **false prophet** in Satan's hand are the **leaders in gathering "the kings of the earth and of the whole world," "to the battle (or war) of that great day of God almighty."** When we compare Rev. 16: 14 with Rev. 13: 13, 14 and Rev. 19: 20 we can readily see that the "miracles" or "signs" which are of Satanic origin, and which, in Rev. 16: 14, deceive "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" to make "war" against their Maker, are wrought in connection with the **mark of the beast**, which is the **spiritual sign** of allegiance to the forces of Satan.

Thus Armageddon is the **symbolical** place where those who are gathered or "united" (see later) in their warfare against the government of Heaven meet their doom at the hand of their Creator.

However, let us retrace our steps, and approach the question from another angle.

We should observe that the entire book of **Revelation was written for the church**. Jesus, the glorious Head of the church, declares: "I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you **these things in the churches**." Rev. 22: 16. It is unmistakably clear that the revelation concerning the battle of Armageddon was written for the church of Christ. Why should these things be proclaimed "in the churches"? The answer is most obvious—because it is **something which vitally affects the church**. Armageddon is **not** something which is fought apart from the church, but a life and death struggle in which the church plays a most prominent part. In our previous study we found that the first Megiddo conflict was a struggle between the forces of God and the forces of Satan. Israel was oppressed by the devil-led Canaanites, and God intervened on behalf of His people. We learned that that was the type of the coming struggle, which, according to Biblical laws of interpretation, must be **world-wide and involve spiritual Israel—the church**. Led on by "the spirits of devils" (Rev. 16: 13) the enemies of the church will "gather" or "unite" to attack the church, in the **anti-typical** Megiddo conflict.

There are **only two armies brought to view in Armageddon**—the forces of God and the forces of Satan. All the forces of Satan come under the heading of "Babylon." "**The kings of the earth and of the whole world**"—**Satan's Babylonian forces**—in the **prophecy are opposed to the heavenly army**, which brings about their complete overthrow. See Rev. 16: 12 and Synopsis on "The Kings of the East."

The same two armies are brought to view in Rev. 17. The forces of Babylon "have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. **These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them**: for He is Lord of Lords,

and King of Kings: and **they that are with Him** are called, and chosen, and faithful." Vs. 12-14. V. 17 also refers to the **uniting, or agreement**, of the sections of Babylon in their "**war with the Lamb**" and **His army** who "are with Him." Once again the same two armies are brought to view in Rev. 19: 11-21. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. . . . And the **armies** which were in heaven followed Him. . . . And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations. . . . and He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS** . . . and I saw the **beast**, and the **kings of the earth**, and **their armies**, gathered to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. And the **beast** was taken, and with him the **false prophet** . . ."

Here are brought to view the same **two armies: The King of Kings, Who comes from heaven with His army to overthrow Satan's forces—"the kings of the earth and of the whole world."** These have united in "power and strength" to "make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of Lords and King of Kings." This title mentioned in the "**war**" or "**battle**" of Rev. 17: 14; 16: 14, is that title which Jesus wears upon His vesture in the "**war**" of Rev. 19: 11-21. The words "war" and "battle" are from the same Greek word, and some translations keep to the one designation from the time this "war" of which the Revelator speaks is first mentioned in Rev. 12: 7. Armageddon is the finale in the "war" which has been in progress down through 6,000 years of sin upon this planet. The "war" or "battle" mentioned in Rev. 12: 7, 17; 13: 4, 7; 16: 14; 17: 14; 19: 11; 20: 8 refers to different aspects of the same "**war**"—**the great controversy between Christ and Satan**. "The last **great conflict** between truth and error is but the **final struggle** of the long-standing **controversy** concerning the law of God. Upon this **battle** we are now entering—a **battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah, the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition**. The agencies which will **unite** against truth and righteousness in this **contest** are now actively at work." "Satan's policy in this **final conflict** with God's people is the same that he employed in the **opening of the great controversy in heaven**."

"From the very beginning of the **great controversy** in heaven it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator; and though he was cast out of heaven, he has **continued the same warfare** upon the earth." "In the soon-coming **conflict** we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: 'The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make **war** with the remnant of her seed.'" Rev. 12: 17.

This, and other predictions, point out that **before** the slaughter of Armageddon takes place Satan will stir up churches with false teaching to seek the co-operation of kings and rulers in making "**war**" against the church. It is this **united effort** of Satan's forces to **persecute God's people that precipitates Armageddon**—the final phase of the "**war**" against God and His truth. This is the time when God steps in to destroy Satan's evil regime. That is what occurs from the outpouring of the sixth and seventh plagues of Rev. 16. One author, writing of that time, says: "For six thousand years the **great controversy** has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in **conflict** with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men. Now (at that time) all have made their decision; the wicked have **fully united** with Satan in his warfare against God. . . . Now the **controversy** is not alone with Satan, but with men."

"The **great conflict** that Satan created in the heavenly courts is soon, very soon, to be forever decided. Soon all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either **for or against the government of heaven**."

In this "war," "battle," or "controversy" there are only two sides—Christ's or Satan's. There have always been only these two sides, and in Armageddon **the same two armies—God's and Satan's—are involved**.

Paul wrote to Timothy: "Endure hardness as a good **soldier** of Jesus Christ." 2 Tim. 2: 3. "**War** a good **warfare**." 1 Tim. 1: 18.



"Onward, Christian **soldiers, marching as to war**,  
With the cross of Jesus going on before.  
Christ, **the Royal Master**, leads against the foe;  
Forward **into battle**, see His banners go.  
Like a **mighty army** moves the church of God;  
Brothers, we are treading where the saints have trod."

This is the theme of many hymns, in which it is easily seen what interpretation these inspired writers gave to the "war" pictures of the Revelation.

"The Son of God goes forth to **war**, a kingly crown to gain;  
His blood-red banner streams afar; who follows in His train?"  
"**Christ our mighty Captain**, leads against the foe."  
"**Soldiers of Christ**, arise, and put your armour on!"

These are sample lines from different hymns—all of which give the inspired interpretation of the "war" imagery of the Apocalypse. In that splendid hymn, "**Who Is On the Lord's Side?**" we see the same sentiments:

"Fierce may be the conflict, strong may be the foe,  
But the King's own army none can overthrow."

The name of this hymn, as seen at its heading, is "**Armageddon**." This leaves no doubt as to what meaning this hymnologist saw in the two armies engaged in "Armageddon." The author of the hymn, "**The Final Conflict**," wrote:

"We are living, we are dwelling, in a grand and awful time;  
In an age on ages telling—to be living is sublime.  
Hark! the **waking up of nations, Gog and Magog** to the fray;  
Hark! what soundeth? Is Creation groaning for her latter day?  
**Christian**, rouse and arm for **conflict**; nerve thee for the **battlefield**;  
Bear the helmet of salvation, and the mighty Gospel shield;  
Let the breastplate, peace, be on thee; take the **Spirit's sword** in hand;  
Boldly, fearlessly go forth then, in Jehovah's strength to stand.  
Wicked **spirits gather** round thee, **legions of those foes to God**—  
Principalities most mighty walk unseen the earth abroad;  
**They are gathering to the battle**, strengthened for the **last deep strife**.  
**Christian**, arm! Be watchful, ready; struggle manfully for life."

These hymn writers have expressed the interpretation held by the most spiritual and devoted men and women of the church. They knew that the "war" or "battle" of the Revelation, from Rev. 12: 7-9, 17 to Rev. 20: 8, including Rev. 16: 12-16, pictures **the great controversy between Christ and Satan**—a conflict which has raged for 6,000 years. Rev. 16: 12-16; 17: 14; 19: 11-21 present the final phase of this great conflict, when Jesus and His army defeat the forces of evil in the slaughter of Armageddon. The **gathering** of the forces to the **battle**; the **last conflict**; etc., by the **evil spirits** in the hymn referred to above is simply setting to music the picture given in Rev. 16: 12-16 of the battle of Armageddon.

The writer of the "Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing," p. 172, says: "The angels from heaven force back the hosts of evil that encompass these souls, and guide them to plant their feet on the sure foundation. The **battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world**, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend." This "war" of the forces of good and evil has waged furiously for 6,000 years. That is what the Revelation was written to explain. The issues associated with Armageddon bring this long controversy between Christ and Satan to an end—by the triumph of the church over her enemies and the destruction of her enemies.

The Lord gave His church these important messages concerning the great controversy between Christ and Satan so that the church would be strengthened in its fight against her enemies. Satan has endeavoured to turn the church away from the true interpretation, for in so doing he can weaken her, and to a certain degree he has succeeded. But the Captain of our salvation will not allow His people to enter into the last conflict without knowing the truth concerning the "war" which began up in heaven (Rev. 12: 7-9), and which has raged for six thousand years, and is shortly

to come to its finale in "Armageddon." "**The battle of Armageddon** is soon to be fought. **He** on whose vesture is written the name, King of Kings and Lord of Lords, is soon to lead forth **the armies of heaven**."

Armageddon is mentioned in the Revelation **because of its importance to the church**. Nations and battles are **only** mentioned in the Bible as they come in contact with the people of God, and **only** because of its **vital concern to the church** is Armageddon mentioned in the Apocalypse. The entire book of Revelation concerns the church. Jesus says in Rev. 1: 11: "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, what thou seest, write in a book, and **send it unto the seven churches** which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."

Commentators agree that these seven cities "in Asia" (not far from Megiddo) are employed symbolically. One well-known writer has expressed it thus: "The book of Revelation was addressed to 'the seven churches which are in Asia.' In the names of these churches, according to the definitions of the word, are brought out the religious features of those periods of the gospel age which they were respectively to represent. They meant **not** merely the seven **literal** churches of Asia, but represent seven periods of the Christian church, from apostolic days to the close of probation. . . .

"It must be obvious that these seven churches are **used symbolically** of all the churches, for it is self-evident that Christ could not represent Himself as standing in the centre of these seven literal churches. . . . the seven churches in Asia were chosen to **symbolize** the seven periods of church history, the **names** of these seven cities and the characteristics of their citizens were admirably fitted to represent the whole gospel church in seven divisions."

The meandering of the old Roman road that connected up these cities in the order set forth in the prophecy is taken to represent the highway of the church. The meaning of the names of the seven cities, and the significant history associated with each place, fit in beautifully and wonderfully with the seven periods of the church since the time of Christ's first advent. In the same way Megiddo is mentioned in Rev. 16: 16, namely, for the **meaning** of its name and for the **history** associated with it in the Old Testament as the place of conflict with evil forces.

Though the seven cities were **actual places "in Asia,"** yet they are employed symbolically in the Revelation. As these **first seven places** in the Revelation are employed in a **purely symbolical** manner, **logic and Scripture combine to show that Megiddo** (the underlying word in Armageddon), in Rev. 16: 16, **is also symbolically employed** in the Revelation. All the places, proper names, and designations of the Revelation are employed symbolically, and that, too, **in connection with Christ and His church**—and their enemies. Notice the following list:

Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Jews, Israel, Antipas, Balaam, Jezebel, the tribes of the children of Israel, Juda, Reuben, Gad, Aser, Naphtalim, Manasses, Simeon, Levi, Isaacar, Zabulon, Joseph, Benjamin, Egypt, Sodom, City, the Holy City, Temple, Sion, Euphrates, Armageddon, Babylon, Jerusalem, Gog and Magog.

All of these are brought into Revelation in connection with the world-wide **struggle between Christ and Satan**. From this, and a **host of other facts**, it is most obvious that the Revelation mentions Armageddon, **not as a military issue, but in connection with the great controversy between Christ and His Church, on the one side, and Satan and his followers, on the other side**.

The meaning of a name is more important in Oriental countries than in Occidental civilizations. In the Bible very frequently there is a deliberate play upon the meaning of a name. Those of the names of the seven cities previously referred to being but one example out of very many Scriptural illustrations. The meaning of Armageddon is "Mount Megiddo." But Megiddo is derived from a word meaning "slaughter." Here is Dr. Strong's definition of the word "Megiddo": "**To gash . . . cut selves . . . to cut down; hew down.**"

The following authorities give the meaning of Armageddon as "**The mountain of destruction**" or "**The mountain of slaughter**"—"The New Testament Pocket Commentary



from Henry, Doddridge, Burkitt, and other writers; Schofield's Bible; Dr. Scott's Commentary; Wilson's Emphatic Diaglott; Weymouth; etc.

Christopher Wordsworth says: "Armageddon or Harmegedon is formed of two Hebrew words, the one, *har*, signifying a mountain, the other a **cutting to pieces**; and thus it means the **mountain of excision or slaughter**."

"The word **Armageddon** then signifies a **mountain of slaughter** like the valley of decision or **cutting off** described by Joel (Joel 3: 14), and is a figurative expression similar to that in the same prophet, namely, the valley of Jehoshaphat (Joel 3: 2, 12) or **Judgment of God**. The word Armageddon seems also designed to signify a **defeat and slaughter**, such as that of the kings of Canaan at Megiddo in the reign of Galilee, wrought by miraculous interposition of Almighty God discomforting the vast and terrible army of Sisera and his confederate princes."

Thus Armageddon comes into the prophetic imagery in regard to the final conflict as the destruction of the forces of evil by the judgment of Christ, to which Christ also made reference in Matt. 25: 31, 32.

**Armageddon is just as symbolically applied as are the waters of the Euphrates.** It is incongruous to interpret the Euphrates river as a symbol and Megiddo as literal when they are both grouped together in the prophecy. The most obvious thing to do is to give them both a symbolical meaning. The river Euphrates has **the same world-wide significance as Babylon**, which was anciently built upon that river. **The Euphrates is Babylon's river**, as may be readily seen by comparing Jer. 51: 13 with Rev. 17: 1, 15; etc.

Notice the following comment on Rev. 16: 12 from the "New Larger Type Edition Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible," by Robert Jamieson, D.D., A. R. Faussett, A.M., David Brown, D.D.: "The drying up of the Euphrates, I think, is to be taken figuratively, as **Babylon itself which is situated on it, is undoubtedly so** (ch. 17: 5). **The waters of the Euphrates** (cf. Isa. 8: 7, 8) **are spiritual Babylon's**, i.e., the apostate churches (of which Rome is the chief, though not exclusive representative) spiritual and temporal powers. . . . **The drying up of the waters of Babylon expresses the same thing as the ten kings stripping, eating, and burning the whore.** . . ."

The Annotated Paragraph Bible has this note on the drying up of the waters of the river Euphrates:

"This figure seems to have reference to the fall of ancient Babylon; when **Cyrus**, at that time **one of 'the kings of the East,'** laid dry the bed of the Euphrates, and so obtained an entrance into the city. This drying up of the Euphrates, therefore, would seem to indicate the removal of some impediment in the way of the executioners of **Divine judgment upon the spiritual Babylon.**"

The writer of the book, "The Story of Prophets and Kings" (pp. 523, 531, 552), mentions that Babylon was "**protected** by the river Euphrates."

Christopher Wordsworth, D.D., wrote of "the River Euphrates, the **glory and bulwark** of Babylon." "Miscellanies Literary and Religious," Vol. I., pp. 437, 438.

In the future the populace will rely upon the religious and political leaders of Babylon to bring about better world conditions. Difficulties will increase upon earth until, in the attempt to placate the wrath of God, Babylon's false teachings in regard to the mark of the beast will be enforced by the laws of the land. This, it will be thought, will surely bring about the good pleasure of God. Then they will say, "Peace and safety." But as those Satan-inspired conceptions of Babylon are contrary to God's law, this merely provokes God's anger more greatly, and so, instead of a better state of things, "sudden destruction cometh upon them . . . and they shall not escape." 1 Thess. 5: 3. Study also in this connection Isa. 47: 11; Rev. 18: 7, 8, 10, 17. The people, then seeing that they have been misled by their spiritual advisers, turn on them in their anger. See Jer. 25: 34-38; Zech. 14: 13; Rev. 17: 15, 16. Babylon's "protection" will go—the waters upon which she has reposed (Rev. 17: 1, 15) will no longer protect her. Those that have hitherto protected her will turn and rend her. **"The drying up of the Euphrates expresses the same thing as the ten kings stripping, eating, and burning the whore."** (Rev. 17: 15, 16.) See extract given above from the "New Larger Type Edition Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible."

The application of "Armageddon" as a literal place by those who interpret the other places, proper names, and designations of the Revelation as symbols is both surprising and illogical. Why should one be selected from the other acknowledged symbols for this literal interpretation? It is of no avail to argue that Rev. 16: 16 distinctly says Armageddon is a "place," for (apart from the fact that all the other cities mentioned were all literal places and yet are symbolically used), Rev. 2: 5 mentions the word "place"—the same word as in Rev. 16: 16—and that "place" is undoubtedly **used in a symbolical sense**.

The matter of whether Armageddon is employed in a literal or in a symbolic sense brings up the issue of systems or modes of interpretation. In the main, there are two schools of interpretation, namely, the Historical and the Futuristic. In a word the two systems differ regarding the literal or the spiritual interpretation of the proper names and designations of the Revelation. The Futuristic conception is that the Antichrist and the prophecies relating to his making "war" on the "saints" has to do with a person who is yet to arise and do his deadly work **in Palestine**, and that, too, **affecting the Jews**. Hence, Futurists say that all the Jewish matters mentioned in the Revelation are to be taken literally—even the "place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." In that system of interpretation the time periods (Rev. 12: 6, 14; 13: 5) are also applied literally.

On the contrary, the Historical school believes that Antichrist is not a military leader operating against the Jews in Palestine some time in the future, but the **ecclesiastical system** headed by the Pope. They maintain that the Pope is the Antichrist, which, while professing to be for Christ, has really acted against Christ's true teachings, and that in the many millions of martyrs slain during the 1,260 years of Papal supremacy the Papacy has fulfilled the prophecies concerning Antichrist, who was predicted to make "war" on the "saints." The days of Rev. 12: 6, 14; 13: 5; Dan. 7: 25 are taken, not as literal days, but each day a symbol of a year—see Ezek. 4: 6, margin; Num. 14: 34.

"The temple of God" in which "the man of sin" was predicted to sit is the christian church (see 1 Cor. 16: 17; 2 Cor. 6: 16; Ephes. 2: 21, 22; etc.), and **not** a temple to be built **in Palestine**. "The image of the beast" and "the mark of the beast" (Rev. 13: 14-17; 14: 9-11; 15: 2; etc.) are not a literal image and a literal mark—they are **spiritual symbols** which apply not to events to occur in Palestine in the future history of the Jews, but **world-wide ecclesiastical institutions** which are destined to affect the whole world, and bring about the slaughter of Armageddon by Jesus when He destroys all those who, by disobedience, are with Satan in the "war" or "controversy" between Christ and Satan.

The Futuristic system has been fostered by the Papacy because it points to an Antichrist to arise in Palestine in the future, and thus turns the eyes of all away from the Roman Catholic hierarchy, which Protestants have declared for so many centuries to be the Antichrist of the prophecies. The Rev. Joseph Tanner, B.A., in his book, "Daniel and the Revelation," pages 16, 17, says: "So great a hold did the conviction that the Papacy was the Antichrist gain upon the minds of men that Rome at last saw she must bestir herself, and try, by putting forth **other systems of interpretations**, to **counteract** the identification of the Papacy with Antichrist. Accordingly, towards the close of the century of the Reformation, two of the most learned doctors set themselves the task, each endeavouring by different means to accomplish the same end, namely, that of **diverting men's minds from perceiving the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Antichrist in the Papal system.** . . . The Jesuit Ribera tried to set aside the application of these prophecies to the Papal power by bringing out the Futuristic system, which asserts that these prophecies refer properly, not to the career of the Papacy, but to that of some future supernatural individual, who is yet to appear, and to continue in power for three and a half years. Thus, as Alford says, the Jesuit Ribera, about A.D. 1580, may be regarded as the founder of the Futuristic system in modern times. It is a matter for deep regret that those who hold and advocate the Futuristic system at the present day, Protestants as they are for the most part, are thus **playing into the hands of Rome, and helping to screen the Papacy from detection as the Antichrist.**"

The Rev. Edward Nangle, of Ireland, after dealing with the origin of Futurism, in 1866 wrote: "**The whole body of the Reformers, English and Continental, without a**



single exception, maintained that the Pope was 'the man of sin.' All the Reformed churches held the same view, as did also the most eminent Protestant authors, with hardly an exception, up to the early part of the present century, when a Romanising High Church clergyman took up the Jesuit view."

The belief that the Papacy fulfils the prophecies relating to the Antichrist was "the unanimous opinion of the whole body of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, and the unanimous judgment of every Protestant church for nearly three hundred years."

In a few words the two systems may be expressed thus: The Futuristic presents the Palestinian-Jewish, and hence the literal, application of the matters mentioned in the Revelation concerning the work of Antichrist; the Historical interpretation gives the non-Palestinian interpretation, which takes the things pertaining to Antichrist mentioned in the Revelation as symbols employed to describe the conflict between the true church, with its God-given truths, and the false system of worship, which has its head in the Papacy. The application of Armageddon as referring to a literal conflict of nations in Palestine is part of the Futuristic system; and, as in the other matters, acts as a screen which blinds the eyes of many to the actual future doings of the ecclesiastical Antichrist in the realms of the church.

#### Who are the leaders in the earthly army in Armageddon?

The leaders in the coming Armageddon are specifically stated to be "the dragon . . . the beast and . . . the false prophet." (Rev. 16: 13.) These three—the false trinity—combine to make up "the three parts" of "the great city . . . great Babylon." (Rev. 16: 19.) Babylon, in the Revelation, is employed symbolically in the ecclesiastical realm as "that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." (Rev. 17: 18.) The message of God is: "Come out of her (Babylon, see v. 2), My people." (Rev. 18: 4.) "That great city Babylon, that mighty city." (v. 10.) "That great city." (v. 16.) "This great city." (v. 18.) Under the symbol of a city the prophecy points out a false system of worship—just as ancient Babylon was the city of which Lucifer was the invisible king. (Isa. 14: 4.)

Babylon was founded by the rebels who opposed the command of God. (See Gen. 10: 10, margin; Gen. 11: 1-9, margin.) Babylon means confusion, and Jesus, in the Revelation, refers to the confused systems of worship which are not based upon the true teachings of His Word. In the Revelation two symbols are employed to fully set forth Babylon—one under the figure of the city, Babylon, and the other under the symbol of the dissolute woman of Rev. 17. This "great whore" "sitteth upon many waters." (v. 1.) This is, of course, a quotation from Jer. 51: 13, where the prophet Jeremiah is describing Babylon situated upon the river Euphrates. Thus the waters of Rev. 17: 1, which are interpreted by the angel in v. 15: "The waters which thou sawest, where the whore (Babylon, see v. 5) sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," are the waters of the Euphrates referred to in Rev. 16: 12. Compare Rev. 16: 12 with Jer. 50: 38; 51: 36; Isa. 44: 27, 28; 41: 2, 25; 46: 11; etc. Both Jeremiah and John write of the Euphrates, the river upon which Babylon was situated. Jeremiah writes: "A drought is upon her waters; and they shall be dried up." (Jer. 50: 38.) John writes of Babylon's river, the Euphrates: "And the water thereof was dried up." (Rev. 16: 12.) John's application, of course, is symbolical.

In John's description of Babylon under the figure of a dissolute woman, he says: "And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (Rev. 17: 5.) "Abominations" in Scripture refer to idols—false systems of worship. "Harlots" also refer to those who profess to be the wife of Christ, but who are not true to their profession—their marriage vow of loyalty to Christ, Who is represented under the figure of a husband. (2 Cor. 11: 2; etc.)

The whole of the setting of Armageddon, when rightly understood, is distinctly in the realm of religion. The only thing is that the conflict between good and evil is pictured under a "war" scene. The "war" pictured by the prophet is over God's "worship" or the "worship" of the beast. (See Rev. 12: 17; 13: 4, 8, 12, 15; 14: 9, 11; 16: 2.) Those who stand loyally by the will of God are said to have "gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark" (Rev. 15: 2), and the beast is the main leader in the earthly forces of Armageddon. (See Rev. 16: 13;

17: 13, 14; 19: 19. So that the conflict is over the true worship of God. The beast seeks to compel the true church to disobey the command of God; as the church refuses the false system of worship turns to those in governmental positions to force God's people by the law of the land to disobey God.

"From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven, it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator; and though he was cast out of Heaven, he has continued the same warfare upon the earth. . . .

"The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long-standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of Jehovah. . . . The agencies which will unite against truth and righteousness in this contest are now actively at work."

The beast blasphemes (see Rev. 13: 2, 5, 6). This connotes religion, for the blasphemy referred to in the Bible is that of a false system, or polluted form, of God's worship. (See Isa. 52: 5; 65: 7; Rom. 2: 24; Acts 26: 11; Rev. 13: 1; 17: 3; etc.) These and other Biblical facts show that the beast, the leading figure in the earthly army in Armageddon, by leading the world in a false system of religion, commits blasphemy, and leads the world to "war" against God. All false forms of worship are from Satan—God's great adversary in the great conflict between right and wrong. Hence to follow the lead of Satan is to serve under his flag, whereas being loyal to God in the manner of His worship and commandments given by Him in His Holy Word, is to fight under the banner of Christ. Thus the Revelator describes the preparation for this final conflict. He urges us to receive the seal, or sign of God; and to be sure that we do not receive the mark or sign of the beast. (Rev. 13: 16, 17; 14: 9-11; etc.)

If John were to describe in modern language what he wrote in the Revelation he would say: "In vision I saw two armies in the terrible conflict. One army was led by the banners bearing the world's insignia; the other was led by the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel. The battle raged. Victory alternated from side to side. The Captain of our salvation was ordering the battle, and sending support to His soldiers. At last victory was gained. The army following the banner with the inscription, 'The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,' was gloriously triumphant."

If we do not worship God in the way He has prescribed, it is insulting to Him as our Creator and Sustainer. So if we turn from God's requirements to follow things which Satan designedly introduced to lead us from God, we serve under Satan's flag. This is the picture presented by the prophet of the army of the world which gathers or unites to "form an alliance with Satan against Heaven, and to join in battle against the Ruler of the universe."

It is obvious that some spiritual institution is to be the especially controverted issue in the coming conflict—the seal, or sign of God, or the mark of the beast, who leads the forces of false worship. Under these two flags the two armies will fight.

In order to obtain moral support from worldly rulers and people, the beast, and those with him, work "miracles." (Rev. 16: 14, and compare with Rev. 13: 13, 14; 19: 20; etc.) In the last verse (Rev. 19: 20) it will be noted that these "miracles" are performed to further the deception regarding the mark of the beast. These miracles have nothing to do with military matters; they are not national miracles, or of miracles performed by one nation against another—they are tokens of one's spiritual office—miracles by which one proves his call to be a messenger for the invisible spiritual forces. Not once is the word employed in the New Testament in regard to national miracles. See the following texts where the same word is found: Luke 23: 8; John 2: 11, 23; 3: 2; 4: 54; 6: 2, 14, 26; 7: 31; 9: 16; 10: 41; 11: 47; 12: 18, 37; Acts 4: 16, 22; 6: 8; 8: 6; 15: 12; Rev. 13: 13, 14; 16: 14; 19: 20; etc.

These miracles, signs, or wonders referred to in Scripture are those which demonstrate the spiritual power of the persons—whether on God's side or on Satan's—but never is the original word employed in Scripture in a national or international sense.



God's servants gave these miracles, signs, or wonders (see Mark 16: 17, 20; Heb. 2: 4; 2 Cor. 12: 12; 2 Thess. 2: 9; Rom. 15: 19; Acts 2: 22, 43; 4: 30; 5: 12; 7: 36; 8: 13; 14: 3; John 20: 30; and all through John's Gospel, where Jesus proves His divinity by these signs, miracles, and wonders). But Satan's servants also produce these same miracles, signs, or wonders. (See 2 Thess. 2: 9; Rev. 13: 13, 14; 16: 13; 19: 20; Matt. 24: 24; Mark 13: 22; Luke 21: 11.) Of the no less than 77 times the original is used in the New Testament, **not once is it given a national meaning.**

Just as in the case of the above, so it can be abundantly proved that every other word employed in the description of Armageddon is mis-applied when interpreted in connection with the teaching of a conflict of nations at literal Megiddo. **Such a belief will not harmonize with the FACTS of the Bible.**

It is the false prophet who works the miracles in the sight of the first beast, and thus, by the signs of his **religious** office, deceives the people on a **question of religion—the mark of the beast.** (See Rev. 13: 13, 14; 16: 13; 19: 20; and compare with Matt. 24: 24; Mark 13: 22; Luke 21: 11; 2 Thess. 2: 9; etc.)

When read through the eyes of the prophets of God everything associated with Armageddon has to do with **religious issues**—and **not** national. Take as another illustration the statement: "And I saw three **unclean spirits** like frogs come out of the mouth of the **dragon**, and out of the mouth of the **beast**, and out of the mouth of the **false prophet**. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." (Rev. 16: 13, 14.) The reference to the unclean spirits is (many hundreds of quotations go to make up that mosaic of Old Testament texts which is called the Revelation) from Zech. 13: 2, which reads: "I will cause the **prophets** and the **unclean spirit** to pass out of the land." That is, **unclean spirits are associated with false prophets; false teachers of religion.** The translators placed in the margin 2 Pet. 2: 1, which reads: "But there were **false prophets** also among the people, even as there shall be **false teachers** among you." In the margin of Rev. 16: 13 the translators placed 1 John 4: 1-3: "Beloved, believe not every **spirit**, but try the **spirits** whether they are of God: because many **false prophets** are gone into the world." The test as to whether these spirits—**prophets and religious teachers**—are for Christ or Antichrist is revealed by what they teach. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak **not according to this word**, it is because there is **no light** in them." (Isa. 8: 20.)

Hence it is what the dragon, beast, and false prophet teach religiously which leads the world to its doom at Armageddon. Jesus warned us of the deadly deceptions which would deceive so many in the last days. (Matt. 24: 23, 24.) Paul also declared that Christ's coming would be "after the working of Satan with **all power and signs and lying wonders**, and with **all** deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them **strong delusion**, that they should **believe a lie**." (2 Thess. 2: 9-11.) "Now the **Spirit speaketh expressly**, that in the **latter times** some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to **seducing** spirits, and doctrines of devils." (1 Tim. 4: 1.)

From these inspired declarations we know that the world is to be led astray on certain religious principles. To deepen the deception; to produce apparent sanction from heaven that the mark of the beast is from God mighty miracles will be wrought. Those unfortified by the Scriptures themselves will surely be deceived, for "if it were possible they shall deceive the **very elect**."

One well-known author in writing on Armageddon comments on Rev. 16: 14: "The **spirits of devils** will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to **fasten them in deception**, and urge them on to **unite** with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. . . .

"Now all have made their decision; the wicked have **fully united** with Satan in his **warfare against God**." Everywhere this writer comments on the coming Armageddon "unite," "confederate," "organize" are the words employed to explain in modern language the meaning of the word "gather."

It would require many pages to point out the number of passages involved in the consideration of prophetic pictures where gatherings are brought to view. A few of them are: Isa. 11: 11, 12; 59: 19, 20; 60: 3-14; Joel 3: 2, 9-17, 21; Zech. 14: 2, 3, 8; Ezek. 38: 5, 6, 15; 39: 2; Matt. 25: 32; etc. Rightly understood, these passages reveal that Christ and His church are the centre of these prophetic descriptions.

The righteous gather to their centre—Christ, their Lord; the enemies of the church gather around the church with Christ within the church. At the end of the one thousand years the unsaved gather around the New Jerusalem, in which are Christ and His church. The prophetic imagery may be summed up as a "triple" view. The first, in the days of national Israel, when God reigned in the literal temple at Jerusalem, and, secondly, in the church in "the dispensation of the Spirit"; and then, in the New Jerusalem, on the earth at the end of the 1,000 years. With this "triple" application before us the prophecies become very plain. Space forbids the enlargement upon this very necessary feature of prophetic understanding. Christ is the centre of the Bible prophecies concerning Israel—and what sincere Christian would have it otherwise?

"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. 18: 20.) "In whom all the building fitly framed **together** groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in Whom ye also are builded **together** for an habitation of God through the Spirit." (Ephes. 2: 21, 22.) The church, which is "builded **together**," is being gathered and "builded **together**" in all the world—the gathering is not a literal gathering—it is a **uniting** with Christ. The English word "together" is used in both vs. 21 and 22; in the Greek there are two words employed, but both are derived from the same root word—"sun." The English word "together" used in Rev. 16: 16, though not the identical Greek word as in Ephes. 2: 21, 22, nevertheless is derived from the same root word "sun." The "together" of Ephes. 2: 21, 22 refers to a **symbolical union**, and **that is what is meant in Rev. 16: 14, 16.**

In the Greek, the word for "gather" in Rev. 16: 14 and "gathered" in v. 16; Rev. 19: 19; etc.—"Sunago"—is derived from "sun," the first definition given by Dr. Strong is "Union." Hence we can understand why the writer previously quoted very often makes use of the word "united" in describing the meaning of the coming conflict. Down through all the centuries of sin there has always been a worldly union—an enmity against God. (James 4: 4; Rom. 7: 7; Gal. 5: 17; Rom. 5: 10; Ps. 83: 2-5.) But by the time of the events of the sixth plague, "the wicked have **fully united** (or gathered under his banner) with Satan in his last **warfare against God**." It is by "the doctrines of devils" promulgated by the dragon, beast, and false prophet, that the world (apart from the true followers of the Lamb of God) is united in opposition to God's law. It is not a physical or military unity, but a spiritual "companionship," which is another of the definitions of the Greek word "sun." Though scattered in different places around the world, they have a **unity of purpose** in their rebellion against the statutes of Jehovah.

Another definition of the Greek word "sun" is "with." It is by the means of the spiritual union that those who obey the voice of Christ are said to be "with Him" in the final conflict between the forces of good and evil. Though in all the world they are gathered out of Babylon (Rev. 18: 4) to stand "with Him" on the battlefield of truth and error. It is by a spiritual union that the **false prophet** is "with the beast." (See Rev. 19: 20.) The Emphatic Diaglott renders the verse: "And the **beast** was captured, and he who was **with him**—that false prophet." Thus two great powers may be separated by great oceans and still be said to be "with" one another—in spiritual unity.

The false prophet will stretch his hand across the gulf and clasp hands, so to speak, with the beast, and with the aid of the dragon they will form a threefold union which will confederate the rebelling elements in one colossal war against God. The unsaved, under the hypnotic power of demons working through the three sections of Babylon, "form an **alliance with Satan** against heaven, and **join in battle against the Ruler of the universe**."

The three parts of Babylon—the tools of Satan in his "war" or "controversy" against God—"form an **alliance** with Satan against heaven, and **join** in battle against the Ruler of the universe"; they are the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. The



dragon, in its earthly meaning, represented the Roman government which ruled the world at the time Christ was born to the church. (Rev. 12: 1-6, 13.) The Roman government, through its representative, endeavoured to slay Christ at His birth when wicked Herod issued the decree to slay the children of Bethlehem. Later, Jesus was crucified upon the cross—a Roman method of torture. And it was the Roman government which put so many Christians to death in the early centuries of the Christian era. As the church developed, persecution came from within—the Papacy used the State to destroy heretics. But the prophet forecasts an attempted revival of the spirit of intolerance. As an outgrowth of the Government of Rome came Papal Rome, and out of the dominion of Papal Rome issued Protestantism, sections of which will so apostatise as to imitate the methods of Papal Rome, and once again clamour for the State—the dragon—to enforce its religious dogmas through State laws. Such a condition is much nearer realization than many suspect.

**"Kings, and rulers, and governors** have placed upon themselves the brand of Antichrist, and are represented as the dragon who goes to make war with the saints."

The dragon makes war with those who keep God's commandments. It would be a strange blindness which would not see that the war which the dragon makes on those who keep God's commandments in Rev. 12: 17 is the same "war" or "battle" (which is from the same Greek word) in which the dragon participates in Rev. 16: 13, 14. The dragon makes "war" against the saints in Rev. 12: 17. He is also pictured as making "war" against God over His commandments in Rev. 16: 13, 14. In Rev. 12: 7 the dragon represents Satan; in Rev. 12: 17 and Rev. 16: 14 he works through "kings, rulers, and governors."

It is "the kings, and rulers, and governors" who "have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. . . . For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." (Rev. 17: 12, 13, 17.) Verse 14 shows that it is **when they give their powers unto the beast that "the kings, and rulers, and governors" make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them.** This is in harmony with Rev. 12: 17; Rev. 16: 13-16, where we are told that the dragon makes "war" on Christ's faithful people who obey His commandments, and thus makes "war" or "battle" with God, who "overcomes them" by slaughtering them at Armageddon—the symbolic place of "slaughter" or "destruction." In Rev. 19: 19, 20 the same trinity is brought to view, and once again we are able to see that the dragon refers to "kings, and rulers, and governors," for we read: "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet." Thus we have: "The beast, and the kings . . . the false prophet." The kings—"the dragon"—are mentioned not because it is a "war" of kings against kings, but of unbelieving kings, who "agree" and then "unite" with the beast and false prophet in enforcing their false religious teachings; in this way they "gather" or "unite" in one combined conflict—"war," "battle," or "controversy": they "form an alliance with Satan against heaven, and join in battle against the Ruler of the universe."

Of all the definitely named places (and many more are alluded to) of the visions of the Apocalypse, there is no doubt as to their having been literal places. Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Jerusalem, Zion, Temple, the Holy City (Rev. 11: 1, 2), Egypt, Sodom, Babylon, Euphrates, are all used symbolically in the Revelation. These are the plain names of definite places—yet they are symbolically employed, even though we are not once (except Egypt and Sodom—see Rev. 11: 8) instructed to apply them in that sense. It is a most remarkable thing that the only place mentioned in the Apocalypse which cannot be definitely located, namely, Armageddon, should be interpreted literally.

No dictionary or lexicon, or a knowledge of the Hebrew or Greek tongue is necessary to locate the other places named in the Revelation, which are symbolically interpreted. But, strange to say, "Armageddon" is the only one of all the places mentioned in the Revelation which is applied literally. There surely would be some justification for giving the easily-recognized-as-literal places a literal interpretation, and the obscure name—Armageddon—a symbolical interpretation. But, instead, the opposite is the case, for the literal (those which are positively identified as actual places) have been symbolically applied, and it is the mystic word which has been interpreted literally. Extraordinary!!!

There are, of course, other places, persons, and events alluded to in the citations from the Old Testament which come into the imagery of the Apocalypse—numbers of them—yet all of those, too, are mentioned because of their symbolical meaning. So that out of all the recognized places, persons, and events either mentioned by name, or alluded to, in the Revelation, only the mystic one—Armageddon—is interpreted literally. This is a most extraordinary thing!!!

The theory of a literal conflict of the nations of the world at Megiddo, in Palestine, as the "Armageddon" is riddled with incongruities. The Word of God says: "For they are spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the **kings of the earth** and of **the whole world**, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. . . . And He **gathered them** together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue **Armageddon**." (Rev. 16: 14, 16.) The Scripture says distinctly that "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" are "**gathered together** into a place called in the Hebrew tongue **Armageddon**." In the vain effort to defend the literal application the feeble statement is sometimes made that not all the nations will be there—only some of them will participate in a decisive conflict at Megiddo. Either **all** of them—"the kings of the earth and of the whole world"—are "**gathered together into a place** called in the Hebrew tongue **Armageddon**," or else they are not. God's Word says that they are **all** "**gathered together into a place . . . Armageddon**"; the literal conflict theory forces those who believe in it to differ from the Scripture. The very fact that they are forced to do so shows the absurdity of the literal application of these verses.

The passage under review says that "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" are "**gathered together** into a place . . . **Armageddon**." Now it is perfectly obvious that kings on the other side of the globe, or in different parts of the earth, are certainly not gathered **together** into a place . . . Armageddon." They are either **gathered together** into this place—supposedly Megiddo, in Palestine—or else they are not "gathered together." If these verses are applied literally they are all "gathered together" in one place—Megiddo. Again the foolishness of the situation—the impossibility—causes the adoption of specious arguments. All of which are unnecessary when Armageddon is employed symbolically. In such an application no impossibilities or incongruities call forth man's ingenuity to reason away the plain words of God.

The more the literal gathering of nations at Megiddo in fulfilment of Rev. 16: 12-16 is considered, the more its inconsistencies and incongruities appear. In Joel 3 **all** the nations are said to **assemble in the valley of Jehoshaphat**. By some, Megiddo and the valley of Jehoshaphat are taken to be in the same place—even though they are approximately 70 miles apart!! But it is apparent that if "**the kings of the earth and of the whole world**" are "**gathered together into a place . . . Armageddon**," then they are not at the same time all gathered together in the valley of Jehoshaphat.

Of course, it is impossible for "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" to be at one "**place**" and **somewhere else simultaneously**. If they are gathered **there**, then they are not **somewhere else**, too. How can "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" be gathered to the literal place—**Megiddo**, and the **same nations, or peoples**, at the same time be "**all**" gathered in the valley of Jehoshaphat, as God's Word so definitely states in Joel 3: 2, 11, 12?

"The valley of Jehoshaphat" and "Armageddon" cannot be literally applied when considering the events of the second coming of Christ. Rev. 16: 14, 16 says that "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" are "**gathered together**" at the "**spot**" Armageddon, whereas Joel says that God will "gather **all** nations, and bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat." "Assemble yourselves, and come, **ALL** ye heathen (Heb., Goyim, nations, Gentiles). Let the nations be awakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge **ALL** the heathen (or nations, Gentiles) round about." It is impossible to take these statements literally—if "the whole world" literally meet at Megiddo, then "**ALL** nations" cannot be in the valley of Jehoshaphat; and if "**All** nations" are gathered into the valley of Jehoshaphat, they cannot at the same time be literally at Megiddo. But when we see that the Revelation blends these things in a symbolical picture, all the utter incongruities of the literal interpretation vanish. Jehoshaphat means "The Judgment of God." Megiddo means "Destruction" or "Slaughter." Hence applied symbolically Armageddon and



the valley of Jehoshaphat refer to the same thing—the judgment of God which results in the destruction of all of His enemies, and the enemies of the church.

It is impossible to make a literal application of Joel 3: 12: "For there (in the valley of Jehoshaphat) will I sit to judge the heathen (or nations) round about." Christ will not literally "sit" in the valley of Jehoshaphat to judge the nations (as the literal interpretations must apply it), for that would contradict the Master's own use of this very passage of Scripture: "When the Son of Man shall come . . . then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory; and before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." (Matt. 25: 31, 32.) If at his second advent Jesus sat in the valley of Jehoshaphat He would then do the very thing about which He warned us in respect to the false Christ and false prophets—the sign of their being counterfeits would be their appearing in certain localities; whereas He would not come to any earthly locality, for His coming would be universal. (See Matt. 24: 23-27, 30, 31; 1 Thess. 4: 16-18.)

Our incomparable Lord, in His wonderful second advent sermon, not only quoted from Joel 3, but also from the prophecy of Zechariah: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." (Matt. 24: 31.) John in Rev. 1: 7 again refers us back to Zech. 12: 11-14. He says: "Behold, He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him." In the margin the translators have placed Zech 12: 10. By turning to Zech. 12: 11-14 we read: "In that day there shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon. And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David . . . the family of Nathan . . . the family of the house of Levi . . . the family of Shimei . . . all the families that remain, every family." The Hebrew for "family"—mispachah—according to Dr. Strong, means "Kindred, tribe."

Zech. 12: 11-14, speaking of the "mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon," says: "The land shall mourn, every family . . . all the families . . . every family." When Jesus quotes this passage of Zechariah He says: "Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn." John's application of the same verses in Zechariah is: "All kindreds (i.e., tribes, as in Matt. 24: 30) of the earth shall wail because of Him." (Rev. 1: 7.) It is to these same "tribes"—"every kindred"—that the message of Rev. 14: 6 is being heralded. These are not Palestinian "families," "tribes," or "kindreds"—the message is a world-wide one.

Zech. 12: 10 points to a Palestinian event—the crucifixion of Christ. (Compare Zech. 12: 10 with John 19: 37.) It was the custom of the prophets to look at some Palestinian fulfillment, and at the same time to look beyond to the great scenes of Armageddon. Readers of the prophecies do not usually take into account the local setting of the prophecies, and consequently misapply the Palestinian aspect in a literal sense when considering the final scenes associated with Armageddon. John shows how the factors, which at one time had a local significance, are now to be applied in a world-wide sense—and that is how he brings all the persons, events, and places—including Megiddo—in his world pictures of Armageddon.

Rev. 1: 7 quotes from Zech. 12: 10, and gives it a world-wide application at the coming of Christ. Zech. 12: 10-14 predicted the mourning in "the land" of Israel when Christ was crucified—the despairing grief of the disciples when Jesus, their only hope, was dead. Matt. 24: 30; Rev. 1: 7 apply that dark and terrible grief as belonging to the wicked in all the world at the last day. Their grief will be in the realization that by a life of sin they have crucified "the Son of God, and afresh, and put Him to an open shame" (Heb. 6: 6)—that they have been at "war" with their Saviour, Who then will be their Judge and destroyer.

This "mourning" is declared by Zech. 12: 10 to be "as the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon." Hadadrimmon was "a place in Palestine"—Dr. Strong. This place was "in the valley of Megiddon." It is self-evident that "the valley of Megiddon" has the same world-wide application as have the other factors

which are quoted from the same passage by Jesus in Matt. 24 and by John in Rev. 1: 7.

Necho, king of Egypt, came up to fight against Charchemish by Euphrates; and Josiah went out against him, despite the "words of Necho from the mouth of God, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddon." As an ally of Babylon, Josiah fought at Megiddo—against the express desire of God. The mourning and lamentation for Josiah at Megiddo mentioned in 2 Chron. 35: 24, 25, form the basis of Zech. 12: 10-14, which in turn is that upon which Jesus bases His statement in Matt. 24: 30 regarding the mourning of all the wicked in all the world—the anti-typical Megiddo—"Armageddon" at the end of the world.

In Rev. 16: 12-16 the Euphrates and Megiddo are associated together, as they are also in 2 Chron. 35: 20-22; 1 Kings 23: 29, 30. Their mention in Revelation, of course, can only be in a world-wide sense—nothing less can possibly fit the rules of interpretation laid down by the Holy Spirit in the Word of God.

These are only a few of the volumes of reasons why the literal interpretation of Armageddon—as a conflict of nations at Megiddo in Palestine—is a mischievous doctrine, which is based upon a misunderstanding of what Jesus in Rev. 16: 12-16 wrote regarding the world-wide destruction awaiting all those who "form an alliance with Satan against heaven, and join in battle against the Ruler of the Universe." By the time of the sixth plague "all have made their decision; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God . . . (then) the controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men."

"The great conflict that Satan created in the heavenly courts is soon, very soon, to be forever decided. Soon all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either for or against the government of heaven."

May God grant that all who read these lines will then be found marching under the blood-stained banner of Prince Emmanuel (which has inscribed upon it "the seal, or sign of the living God"), and share in the coming victory of righteousness over evil, when the whole world, marching under the dark banner of Satan (upon which is inscribed "the mark of the beast"), will, in the "final conflict," "war," or "battle" against God, meet its doom in the world-wide destruction of Armageddon.

Right in the midst of the picture of the events associated with Armageddon we read: "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." This, of course, has nothing to do with military matters. The admonition this very verse (v. 15) contains should take our minds for ever off the material conflict of nations in one place, to see the war raging in all the world between the forces of good and evil. Worldly interpretations of a battle to take place in far-away Palestine entertains the man of the world, but it has no vital message of warning and of salvation for his soul. But he needs to know, as we all do, that all of us have to make our decision in this battle—either we serve Christ or Satan, and our decision will determine which side we will be on in the world-wide slaughter of Armageddon.



## THE OLD TESTAMENT SOURCE OF THE PHRASEOLOGY USED IN JOHN'S DESCRIPTION OF THE OVERTHROW OF SPIRITUAL BABYLON.

To understand the expressions which John employs in his description of the overthrow of spiritual Babylon it is necessary to go back to the Old Testament records of the overthrow of ancient Babylon.

The following comparisons will reveal that John, in his pictures of the overthrow of **spiritual** Babylon, is merely repeating phrases and facts relating to the overthrow of **literal** Babylon.

### LITERAL BABYLON IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Dan. 4:30. Great.  
Isa. 47:5, 7, 8. Lady of kingdoms.  
Isa. 47:9. Has children.  
Isa. 47:9 } Destruction in one day.  
Jer. 51:8 }  
Isa. 47:8, 10, 12, 13, 15. Feel secure—disaster not come.  
Isa. 47:9, 11 }  
Jer. 51:8 } Destruction to come suddenly.  
Jer. 50:44 }  
  
Jer. 50:43-44 } As travail upon a woman  
Isa. 13:8 } with child.  
  
Isa. 47:11-13, 15. None shall save thee. Thou shalt not be able to put it off.  
  
Jer. 51:49. Guilty of all slain.  
Jer. 51:7. Golden cup—nations drunk.  
  
Jer. 51:13. Abundance of treasures.  
  
Jer. 50:29. Rewarded according to her works.  
Jer. 51:60-61. Babylon's doom preached in her.  
Jer. 50:8 } God's three messages—  
Jer. 51:6 } Come out of her, My  
Jer. 51:46 } people.  
Jer. 51:44. Wall of Babylon to fall.  
  
Jer. 50:32 }  
Jer. 51:32 } Fire devours.  
Jer. 51:58 }  
Isa. 47:14 }

### SPIRITUAL BABYLON IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

Rev. 16: 19; 17:5; 18:10, 21. Great.  
Rev. 18:7. Queen.  
Rev. 17:5. Mother.  
Rev. 18:8. Destruction in one day.  
Rev. 18:8. Shall see no sorrow.  
1 Thess. 5:3. Say, Peace and safety.  
Rev. 18:8. In one day, death, mourning and sorrow.  
Rev. 18:10. In one hour thy judgment is come.  
1 Thess. 5:3. Sudden destruction cometh upon them—after the enforcement of the Sunday law.  
1 Thess. 5:3. As travail upon a woman with child.  
  
1 Thess. 5:3 } They shall not escape.  
Rev. 18:8 } Her plagues come. The whole of Rev. 18 describes the calamities which befall her.  
Rev. 18:24. Guilty of all slain.  
Rev. 17:2, 4. Golden cup—nations drunk.  
Rev. 18:3 } Abundant treasures.  
Rev. 18:16 }  
Rev. 17:4 }  
Rev. 18:6. Rewarded according to her works.  
Rev. 14:6-11 } Babylon's doom preached  
Rev. 18:1-4 } in her.  
Rev. 14:6-11 } Three messages linked  
Rev. 18:4 } with the call out of her.  
  
Ezek. 13:10-16 } Spiritual wall falls.  
Rev. 19:20 } Mark of beast collapses when beast's power gone.  
Rev. 18:8, 9, 18 } Fire devours—the figure of the burning of the city of old Babylon is still maintained in the doom of modern Babylon, but it has a spiritual application. The imagery is borrowed from the O.T., and denotes the completeness of destruction.

Jer. 51:57. Perpetual sleep; never wake.  
Jer. 51:8 } Babylon falls.  
Isa. 29:9 } Babylon is fallen, is fallen.

Jer. 51:9. Her judgment reacheth unto heaven, and is lifted to the skies.  
Jer. 50:34. Judged by Israel's "strong Redeemer."  
Jer. 50:46. Cry "among the nations" "at the noise of the taking of Babylon."  
Jer. 50:39 } Habitation of wild creatures.  
Jer. 51:37 }  
Isa. 13:21 } Habitation of unclean birds.  
Isa. 14:23 }  
Jer. 51:48 } "The heaven and the earth, and all that is therein, shall sing for Babylon: for the spoilers shall come unto her."  
Isa. 44:23 }  
Jer. 51:49. "At Babylon shall fall the slain of the earth."

Jer. 51: 13. "O thou that dwellest upon many waters." On this verse the Annotated Para. Bible comments: "The Euphrates and its numerous canals, which passed through and near the city."  
Isa. 34:10. "The smoke thereof shall go up for ever"—spoken of the land of Edom, which is used typically of the destruction of all the wicked.  
Jer. 51:63-64. Jeremiah wrote in a book all the evil that should come upon Babylon. . . . Thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of the Euphrates; and thou shalt say, Thus shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise."

**A literal city built on the literal river Euphrates—Jer. 51:13; PK., 523.**  
Jer. 50:38 } "A drought is upon her  
Jer. 51:36 } waters; and they shall be  
Isa. 44:27 } dried up."

Dan. 8:20-21. While the rough goat is said to be "the king of Grecia," "the ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia." Also Jer. 51:11, 27, 28.

Rev. 18:21-23. Babylon no more at all.  
Rev. 14:8 } Babylon is fallen, is fallen.  
Rev. 18:8 } Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen.  
Rev. 18:5. Her sins have reached unto heaven.  
Rev. 18:8. "Strong is the Lord God Who judgeth her."  
Rev. 18:9. "Kings . . . bewail her, and lament for her."

Rev. 18:2. Habitation of devils.  
Rev. 18:2. Cage of every unclean and hateful bird.  
Rev. 18:20. "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles, and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her."  
Rev. 18:24. "And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth."

Rev. 17:1. "The great whore that sitteth upon many waters."  
Rev. 16:12. Sixth plague is poured out upon Babylon's river—the Euphrates.  
Rev. 19:3. "And her smoke rose up for ever and ever." This, of course, includes all the unsaved.

Rev. 18:21. "A mighty angel took up a stone like a millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all."  
Compare Jer. 51: 36 with Jer. 50:38. "Sea" is used in Jer. 51:36 for the waters of the Euphrates in Jer. 50:38. See also Isa. 44:27 where "deep" is also used to describe the Euphrates. See also Josh. 24:2, 14, 15, where the Euphrates is called "the flood." See also Rev. 12:15, 16; etc.

**A spiritual city built upon the spiritual Euphrates.—Rev. 17: 1, 15.**  
Rev. 16:12. "And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up."  
Rev. 16:12. "That the way of the kings of the east might be prepared."



Isa. 41:2, 25; 46:11. Cyrus, who led the Medes and the Persians against Babylon, came "from the east," "from the rising of the sun." Cyrus came from Persia, which is east of Babylon. Isa. 41:25 predicted that this one from "the rising of the sun" would "call upon My name." In fulfillment of this we observe in 2 Chron. 36:22, 23; Ezra 1:1, 2 that Cyrus is declared to be the "king of Persia" who gave the decree for the liberation of the Jews and their return to Palestine to rebuild Jerusalem. Isa. 44:27, 28; 45:13.

It was Cyrus of Persia who led the Medes, and their allies of the north, against Babylon. Thus Elam joined Media against Babylon, as was predicted in Isa. 21:2; 13:17. Some of the allies associated with Persia in the overthrow of Babylon came from the north, as is mentioned in Jer. 50:41; 51:27, 28. Cyrus, from Persia to the east, because he led nations from the north, is also referred to in Isa. 41:25 in connection with the north. But primarily Cyrus, with soldiers from his native land, came from Persia, located to the east of Babylon.

Isa. 46:11. "Calling . . . from the east the man that executeth my counsel from a far country."

Isa. 44:28. Cyrus—Shepherd.

Isa. 45:1. Cyrus—God's Anointed, or Messiah. Overthrows Babylon.

Isa. 45:13. Cyrus delivers Israel from Babylonian captivity.

This enables us to see the Old Testament origin and significance of the statements made by John in the Revelation. To interpret Rev. 16:12 in relation to the Japanese or the Chinese is to bring in something entirely irrelevant to the purpose of the prophecy. In his portrayal of the overthrow of spiritual Babylon John describes it by using the Old Testament records of the overthrow of literal Babylon. Only as viewed in this way can the correct interpretation of Rev. 16:12 be obtained.

Rev. 16:12. "The kings who were from the rising of the sun."—Rotherham.

"The kings who are from the sunrising."—Emphatic Diaglott.

"The kings from the rising sun."—Fenton.

"The kings who are to come from the east."—Weymouth.

EW., 15; GC., 640; Ezek. 43:2; Matt. 24:27; Luke 1:78, margin; Mal. 4:2; etc.

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## What the Spirit of Prophecy Teaches Concerning Armageddon

The positions taken in my brochures on this subject have been based upon the actual teachings of the Spirit of Prophecy. Sometimes the statement is made that the Spirit of Prophecy has not mentioned anything about Armageddon—but such a statement reveals a failure to grasp what the Spirit of Prophecy has so often written about this subject. The Spirit of Prophecy gives considerable prominence to the themes associated with Armageddon. The reason why this has not been seen is because false ideas of Armageddon have been imbibed, and because the Spirit of Prophecy does not mention these false ideas, then it is taken for granted that the Spirit of Prophecy is silent on such subjects. Instead of stating that the Spirit of Prophecy does not mention these man-made ideas of Armageddon, it should be an occasion to say, "If the Spirit of Prophecy does not say anything of my ideas of Armageddon, then it must be due to the fact that I have the wrong idea of it, and that if I could rightly understand the writings of God's messenger, then I would discover that she does say quite a little about Armageddon, only, not according to my previous theories which were based upon a wrong interpretation of the prophecies relating to this theme."

One of the convincing evidences that the Spirit of Prophecy was inspired of God is because of its utter silence regarding the popular theories of a clash of nations in Palestine as the Armageddon of Rev. 16:16. Such theories are based upon a misunderstanding of Armageddon—the Spirit of Prophecy is silent on those theories because they are wrong; but it has much to say about Armageddon as is taught in the Word of God.

Statements from the Spirit of Prophecy concerning "the coming conflict" when compared with the true understanding of the events leading up to, and the battle of Armageddon, reveal that God's messenger describes the same things as John does in the Revelation. In the preceding study it has been shown that the "war" of Rev. 12:7 has reference to the commencement of the great controversy between Christ and Satan. Rev. 12:17 points to the close of this "war" or "controversy." Satan has been at "war" with God and His law ever since the inception of sin—those whom he can persuade to disobey God's law are on his side, while those who stand true to God and obey His law are on God's side of this "war." Consequently, the "remnant" of the church, is the object of Satanic attack—"The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus." Rev. 12:17.

Satan works through human instrumentalities—earthly powers of church and state. In the future, through state laws enforcing the mark of the beast, the church will be brought into conflict with worldly authorities. It is because these church and state powers will endeavour to compel the true church of God to obey the subtle command of Satan—the mark of the beast—and thus persecute the church of God, that those who have thus made "war" on the church over "the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ" are destroyed by God at Armageddon, "the battle (or war) of that great day of God Almighty."

The war or battle described by the Revelator, from its commencement in heaven (Rev. 12:7) till its close (Rev. 12:17; 16:14; 17:14; 19:11, 19; 20:8), is what is revealed in "The Conflict of the Ages" series of the Spirit of Prophecy. These great volumes from the pen of God's servant are full of this "war" between Christ and Satan. Right throughout these books frequent mention is made of this "conflict." The book entitled: "The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan" contains nothing but what is an unfolding of the historical and prophetic pictures of this "war"; the very title is simply stating in another way what John describes as the "war" which began "in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels"—"The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan."

The following statements from the Spirit of Prophecy will show that God's servant wrote fully concerning the "war" against God, and fully described the events which lead up to "the final conflict"—the finale of "The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan"—"Armageddon":—



"There was war in heaven. Angels engaged in the battle; Satan wished to conquer the Son of God . . . But the good and true angels prevailed, and Satan, with his followers, was driven from heaven." E.W.146. Notice the next extract in which "conflict" is employed instead of "war." "The great conflict that Satan created in the heavenly courts is soon, very soon, to be forever decided. Soon all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either for or against the government of heaven." Vol. 7 of Testimonies, p. 141. Thus the messenger of God has used the word "conflict" as the alternative word for "war" in Rev. 12:7; and, further, states that "war" or "conflict" "is soon, very soon, to be forever decided" when "all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either for or against the government of God," by either obeying or disobeying the law of God.

Thus the future actions of "all the inhabitants of the earth" in taking "sides," either for or against God is the conclusion of "the great conflict that Satan created in the heavenly courts." The finale of this "war" which began in heaven is "Armageddon." And in all that the Spirit of Prophecy has written concerning the coming conflict, the final struggle, the closing scenes, etc., is God's revelation of what constitutes the prelude to, and the destruction of, Armageddon when God destroys His enemies who have "gathered" or "united," or "taken sides," with Satan in his "war" against God.

Writing of the war which is raging between the forces of good and evil, we read: "The battles waging between the two armies are as real as those fought by the armies of this world, and on the issue of the spiritual conflict eternal destinies depend." "Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing," p. 172; "Prophets and Kings," p. 176. In Vol. 8, pp. 41-47, we have a chapter on "A View of the Conflict."

"In vision I saw two armies in terrible conquest. One army was led by banners bearing the world's insignia; the other was led by the bloodstained banner of Prince Emmanuel . . . company after company from the Lord's army joined the foe, and tribe after tribe from the ranks of the enemy united with the commandment—keeping people . . . a mighty general cried out with a loud voice: 'Come into line. Let those who are loyal to the commandments of God and the testimony of Christ now take their position. . . . Let all who will come up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty.'

"The battle raged. Victory alternated from side to side. Now the soldiers of the cross gave way, 'as when a standard-bearer fainteth.' Isa. 10:18. . . . The Captain of our Salvation was ordering the battle, and sending support to his soldiers. . . . He led them on step by step, conquering and to conquer.

"At last the victory was gained. The army following the banner with the inscription, 'The commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus,' was gloriously triumphant. The soldiers of Christ were close beside the gates of the city, and with joy the city received her King. Now the church is militant. . . . But the day is coming in which the battle will have been fought, the victory won. . . .

"But the church must meet and will fight against seen and unseen foes. . . . Men have confederated (By comparing statements made by God's messenger we see that she uses words such as "unite," "confederate," etc., instead of "gather" as in Rev. 16:14, 16; 19:19) to oppose the Lord of hosts. These confederacies will continue until Christ shall leave His place of intercession before the mercy seat, and shall put on the garments of vengeance. Satanic agencies are in every city, busily organizing into parties those opposed to the law of God. Professed saints and avowed unbelievers take their stand with these parties."

In this description we follow the "war" or "conflict" to its end when everyone has taken his side, either for or against God's law, and then Christ leaves the mercy-seat and dons "the garments of vengeance," which, in other passages of the Spirit of Prophecy, we learn, is executed in Armageddon.

We know that the "war" of Rev. 12:17 is that final issue in which the church will be involved over the keeping of God's commandments.

In Rev. 7:1-3 we know is pictured the message of "the seal, or sign of God" which must go to the world to warn and prepare honest hearts for the coming destruction symbolized by the destructive winds blowing on land and on sea. We know from such verses as Ezek. 20:12, 20; Ex. 31:13, 16; 17; Isa. 8:16; etc., that the seal of the "Living" God is the seventh-day Sabbath which the Creator instituted as the memorial

of His mighty works of Creation. The call to receive "the seal, or sign, of the living God" in Rev. 7:1-3 precedes the bursting of the final time of trouble to which Daniel makes reference in Dan. 12:1. The expression "living God" points us to the Creatorship of God—see Acts 14:15; etc. Before Christ comes to reap the harvest of the earth (Rev. 14:14-20) the message is pictured as going to all the world calling upon all to "worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." Rev. 14:7. This is, of course, a repetition of the Sabbath commandment.

This same message sounds a most solemn warning against the worship of the beast, and of his image, and the reception of the mark of the beast—which is in contrast to God's sign, the seventh-day Sabbath, the memorial of creation. Many honest-hearted Sunday keepers do not know that the Sabbath was changed as a part of the "war" of Satan against God; they do not know that God is about to end this controversy between Himself and Satan over His law—therefore the warning message is being sounded in all the world, so that all honest hearts may be acquainted with the reasons why God looks upon continued disregard of the Sabbath command as siding with the enemy who dared change that precept which God prefaced with the word "Remember." In the finale of the "war" between God and Satan over the commandments of God it stands to reason, apart from the revelation in Scripture, that God will destroy all those who are on Satan's side in the issue of violating the law of God, the wages for the breaking of which is death. Rom. 6:23; etc. Especially does this solemn fact impress itself on our minds when we know that Armageddon will not come until after the close of probation, and the ending of the day of salvation. With no Mediator, the inhabitants of earth cannot receive mercy. When our great High Priest has accomplished His mediatorial work, and salvation's door is forever closed, the day of vengeance will commence, and the forces of Satan will be completely overthrown.

"The Sabbath question is to be the issue in the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part. Men have honoured Satan's principles above the principles that rule in the heavens. They have accepted the spurious Sabbath, which Satan has exalted as the sign of his authority. But God has set His seal upon His royal requirement. Each Sabbath institution bears the name of its author, an ineffaceable mark that shows the authority of each. It is our work to lead the people to understand this. We are to show them that it is of vital consequence whether they bear the mark of God's kingdom or the mark of the kingdom of rebellion, for they acknowledge themselves subjects of the kingdom whose mark they bear." Vol. 6, p. 352.

"The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama. When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in majesty to shake terribly the earth. . . .

"The great conflict that Satan created in the heavenly courts is soon, very soon, to be forever decided. Soon all the inhabitants of the earth will have taken sides, either for or against the government of heaven." Vol. 7, p. 141. It is when the false Sabbath "becomes universal, God will reveal Himself," and "arise in majesty to shake terribly the earth"; which he does in Armageddon. Rev. 16:18; Ezek. 38:19, 20; Heb. Joel 3:16; Heb. 12: 26; Rev. 6: 14-17.

Stating that "the observance of an institution of the Papacy would be enforced upon the people by a Sunday law" God's messenger says: "The Captain of our salvation will strengthen His people for the conflict (or war) in which they must engage." Vol. 5, p. 137.

In Vol. 5, p. 449, we have the chapter "The Coming Crisis." "Crisis" is another word used for the final phase of the "war" over God's commandments. After quoting Rev. 12:17 which depicts the "war" the dragon makes upon the remnant of the church, God's servant says: "In the near future we shall see these words fulfilled, as the Protestant churches unite (or gather as the Scripture says in Rev. 16:14, 16; 19:19) with the world and with the papal power against commandments—keepers. . . . Church and state are now making preparations for the future conflict. . . . To secure popularity and patronage legislators will yield to the demand for a Sunday law. Those who fear God cannot accept an institution that violates a precept of the decalogue. On this battle-field comes the last great conflict of the controversy between truth and error. . . . The Judge of all the earth is soon to arise and vindicate his insulted authority." This, of course, He does in "Armageddon" when He destroys those who have insulted Him, by persistently siding with His enemy—even in the face of His message.



In Vol. 5, p. 711, we have the chapter: "The Impending **Conflict**. A great **crisis** awaits the people of God. A **crisis** awaits the world. The most momentous **struggle** of all ages is just before us." Then follows the outline of the imminence of the enforcement of Sunday laws.

Extracts previously given show that "conflict" is the word God's messenger employs instead of "war" or "battle," so that impending conflict refers to the impending "war" or "battle."

"I was shown that, that the observance of an institution of the Papacy would be enforced by a Sunday law. . . . The Captain of our salvation will strengthen His people for the **conflict** in which they must engage." Vol. 5, p. 137.

In "The Great **Controversy**—Between Christ and Satan" chapter 36 deals with "The Impending **Conflict**—Its Causes.

"From the very beginning of the great **controversy** (or **war**, Rev. 12:7, 17) in Heaven, it has been Satan's purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator; and though he was cast out of heaven, he has continued the **same warfare** upon the earth. To deceive men, and thus lead them to transgress God's law, is the object which he has steadfastly pursued. Whether this be accomplished by casting aside the law altogether, or by rejecting one of its precepts, the results will be ultimately the same. He that offends 'in one point' manifests contempt for the whole law; his influence and example are on the side of transgression; he becomes 'guilty' of all. James 2:10. . . .

"The last great **conflict** between truth and error is but the **final struggle** of the long-standing **controversy** concerning the law of God. Upon this **battle** we are now entering—a **battle** between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition.

"The agencies which will **unite** (God's messenger employs the word "**unite**" for "**gather**" as used in the English of Rev. 16:14, 16; 19:19—this, of course, is in harmony with the Scriptures as the preceding outline has shown) against truth and righteousness in this **contest** (or "**battle**" or "**war**") are now actively at work." The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan," p. 582. The gathering to the **final conflict** is already in progress, and by the time of the sixth plague the wicked are "**fully united**" with Satan in his warfare against God. "The **battle** of that great day of God Almighty" is the final phase of the "**war**" or "**controversy**" of Satan against God and His law.

"The **miracle-working power** (God's servant in other places shows the meaning of the expression in Rev. 16:14: "For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty," for it is the miracles performed by the evil spirits in connection with the mark of the beast (see Rev. 13:13, 14; 19:20) that many will be deceived into **fully uniting** with Satan against God and His law) **manifested through Spiritualism** will exert its influence against those who choose to obey God rather than men. Communications from the spirits will declare that God has sent them to convince the rejectors of Sunday of their error. . . . Great will be the indignation excited against all who refuse to accept their testimony.

"Satan's policy in this **final conflict** (the statement regarding "the miracle-working power manifested through Spiritualism" to deceive the world regarding the mark of the beast, is the inspired comment on the gathering or uniting of the kings of the earth and of the world to the battle of that great day of God Almighty) with God's people is the same that he employed in the opening of the **great controversy in heaven**." That is, the conflict over the Sabbath, is but the **finale** of the "**war**" Satan began in heaven.

"The dignitaries of church and State will **unite** (the same word as "**gather**" in Rev. 16:14) to bribe, persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. . . . Rulers and Legislators (said in Testimonies to Ministers, p. 39, to be "the dragon"; that is, rulers and legislators "**unite**" or "**gather**" with the beast and the false prophet in the final phase of the "**war**" or "**battle**" against God), in order to secure public favour, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. . . . In the soon-coming **conflict** we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: 'The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make **war** with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God.'" "The Great Controversy," pp. 591, 592.

God's messenger having given the interpretation of Rev. 16:14 concerning the miracles performed through the agencies of Spiritualism working through the false prophet, we can readily see that the "**war**" of Rev. 12:17 and the "**battle**" or "**war**" of Rev. 16:14; 19:19; 20:8 not only are all from the same Greek word, but that they refer to the same "**war**," struggle, "**Conflict**" or "**Controversy**." As this presents the **Lord's interpretation** of "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" the only way God's messenger could have said anything about a gathering of nations at Megiddo as the supposed Armageddon would have been in a negative statement. As she has frequently urged upon us the necessity of keeping to the affirmative, and not to emphasise error unnecessarily by repeating it even in refuting it, she has given us the positive teaching of God upon Armageddon. So by saying that the Spirit of Prophecy has not said anything about Armageddon is only an acknowledgment that God's servant did not write anything about the man-made ideas of the supposed gathering of nations at literal Megiddo; **instead she wrote the truth concerning Armageddon, giving the full details**. It is the human theorisings which have blinded eyes to what God has abundantly written concerning Armageddon.

"Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. The powers of earth, **uniting** (same word as "**gather**" in Rev. 16:14) to war (same word in Greek as "**battle**" in Rev. 16:14) against the commandments of God, will decree that all . . . shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false Sabbath." Ibid. 604.

"The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty. . . . When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. . . .

"Heretofore those who presented the truths of the third angel's message have often been regarded as mere alarmists. Their predictions that religious intolerance would gain control in the United States, that church and State (the dragon represents the State—"the rulers and legislators"—See Test. Min. 39; the false system of worship is summed up in the beast and the false prophet who unite with the State—the Dragon) would **unite** ("gather." Rev. 16:14) to persecute those who keep the commandments of God, have been pronounced groundless and absurd." Ibid. 605.

"The church appeals to the strong arm of civil power (the dragon), and in this work, Papists and Protestants **unite** ("gather"). As the movement for Sunday enforcement becomes more bold and decided, the law will be invoked against Commandment keepers." Ibid. 607.

"By **uniting** ("gathering") with the world and partaking of its spirit, they (back-slidden Adventists) have come to view matters in nearly the same light." Ibid. 608.

"The agencies of evil are **combining** (or uniting, or gathering, as shown in other statements of the Spirit of Prophecy, as in Rev. 16:14) their forces, and consolidating. They are **strengthening** (**uniting, gathering**) for the last great crisis." Vol. 9, p. 11. Previously we have seen that "the last great crisis" is over the Sabbath. The forces of opposition to the law of God are uniting, gathering now for the last great crisis, or conflict, but by the time of the sixth plague all outside the army of Christ—those who have "taken sides" "against the government of God"—are **fully united** with Satan in his **warfare against God**."

"The Lord hath a controversy with the nations. . . . For six thousand years the great controversy (or "**war**") has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in **conflict** with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men. Now (at that time—the time for the final scenes—Armageddon) all have made their decision; the wicked have **fully united** with Satan in his **warfare against God**. The time has come for God to vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. Now the **controversy** is not alone with Satan, but with men."

"Every soul that is not fully surrendered to God, and kept by divine power, will form an **alliance** (unite or gather) **with Satan** against heaven, and **join in battle against the Ruler of the universe**." Test. Min. 465. The right interpretation of Rev. 16:14, 16 enables us to know that the above expression is simply stating what is in those verses concerning the forces of evil which unite or gather in their "**war**" or "**battle**" against "God Almighty" or as translated by Weymouth "the battle which is to take place on the great day of God, the **Ruler of all**." Hence the statement in Test. Min. 465 in referring to the "Alliance with Satan against heaven" and the "**battle** against the **Ruler of the universe**" is exactly what is given in Weymouth's Translation of Rev. 16:14.



In "The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan," p. 623, we are given the Lord's comment upon Rev. 16:14:—

"... the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to **gather** them to Megiddo? NO! to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to **unite** ("gather" is used in the text) with Satan in his **last struggle against the government of Heaven.**" The government of Heaven, of course, is not at Megiddo! **Here is God's own interpretation.** He declares the meaning of this work of demons to **"gather"** all mankind—"the kings of the earth and of the whole world"—as **fastening "them in deception,"** not to go to Megiddo, but to **"unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of Heaven."** This is not a matter pertaining to Megiddo in Palestine; but in all the world the wicked will make "war" "against the government of Heaven." Then, without the Spirit of God to hold Satan back, all the evil propensities of men will have free exercise: **"Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed . . . the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God."**

**"The battle of Armageddon** is soon to be fought. He on Whose vesture is written, King of kings, and Lord of lords, is soon to lead forth the armies of heaven." Vol. 6, p. 406. The battle of Armageddon is described in Rev. 19: 11-21. God's messenger when referring by name to Armageddon quotes from the description given in Rev. 19:11-21. Armageddon is God's answer to Satan and the world's "war" against Him—they are destroyed. The word Armageddon means—"The Mountain of Slaughter."

In "The Great Controversy," p. 561, 562, we are given the correct interpretation of the work of evil spirits in gathering "the kings of the earth and of the whole world to the battle of that great day of God Almighty"—"Satan has long been preparing for his **final effort to deceive the world.** . . . He has not yet reached the **full accomplishment of his designs;** but it (Satan **deceiving the world to join him in his rebellion against God's law**) will be reached in the last remnant of time. Says the prophet (then is quoted Rev. 16: 13, 14). Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His Word, the whole world will be swept into the ranks of this delusion. The people are fast being lulled to a fatal security, to be awakened only by the outpouring of the wrath of God."

Thus we see that **God's interpretation** is nothing to do with a gathering of nations at Megiddo, but of **the whole world being deceived into joining up with Satan in his warfare against God**—which he will do in regard to the mark of the beast—and this "gathering" or "uniting with Satan" brings about "the outpouring of the wrath of God" in the destruction of the world-wide Armageddon.

"Satan also works with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. (Rev. 13:13). **Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand.**" G.C. 612.

"Through the agency of **Spiritualism, miracles will be wrought.** . . . Satan determines to **unite** (Rev. 16:14 states that miracles will be wrought by evil spirits, and that by these means all will gather to the battle of God—in other words God's messenger is stating the same things as John in Rev. 16: 14, and that has nothing to do with nations meeting at Megiddo) them in one body" G.C. 590.

"Satan . . . is now putting forth his utmost efforts for a **final struggle** against Christ and His followers. . . . Antichrist is to perform his marvellous works in our sight. Ibid. 593.

**"The Sabbath question** is to be the **issue** in the great **final conflict** ("war" or "battle") in which **all the world will act a part.**" 6T. 352.

The following extract from Dr. Barnes' notes is given because it shows how other writers beside God's messenger have given Rev. 16:13-16 the interpretation as set forth above: "To **gather** them. **Not literally** to assemble them all in one place, but to so **unite them** that that it might be **represented as an assembling** of the hosts for battle . . . there will be a mustering of **spiritual forces;** there will be a combination and a **unity of opposition against the truth . . . as if the forces of the earth, marshalled by kings and rulers, were assembled in some great battlefield, where the destiny of the world was to be decided. . . . The meaning here is, that there would be, as it were, a decisive battle which would determine the question of the prevalence of true religion."**

For further study see Vol. I, p. 223; 5T. 81, 213; 8T. 117; 9T. 15-17, 229-231; T.M. 37, 39, 133, 472-473; PK. 188, 276; 6T. 404-408, etc.

There are two gatherings taking place in the world today—the gathering of God's people from Babylon; and the gathering of the forces of the world to oppose God and His people. In Isa. 60 is pictured the coming of the Gentiles to Jerusalem—His church, the "city of truth," Zech. 8:2, in which reigns the Holy One of Israel. The Spirit of Prophecy comments upon this chapter:—

"The prophet heard the voice of God calling **His church** to her appointed work." PK. 375; AA. 595.

A study of Isa. 60 will reveal the mention of the words "gather" or "gathered" and their equivalents. This gathering to Jerusalem, which is pictured in Isa. 60, is **always** explained in the Spirit of Prophecy to be a prophecy of our work of bringing souls to Christ in His church. This **gathering** is also predicted in Isa. 11:11, 12:—"And shall **assemble** the outcasts of Israel, and **gather together** the dispersed of Judah from the four corners of the earth. PK. 375, 376; EW. 74, 75; 6T. 133; 7T. 172; 9T. 51, apply this gathering from the four corners of the globe to Jerusalem, to the work of the 3rd angel's message calling people to join up with Israel on the side of God. The gathering of God's remnant from all parts of the earth, described in Isa. 11:11, 12, which is interpreted by the Spirit of Prophecy as a spiritual gathering—a uniting in the truth of God—which is done by the 3rd angel's message, is the same language as the gathering of the nations in Joel 3:2, 11; Zech. 12:3, 9; Rev. 16:14, 16; 19:19, etc.

In Rev. 17:14 the remnant is said to be **"with"** Christ in the final struggle between the forces of good and evil. They are united **"with"** Him by loyalty to God's government. In the same way the forces of wrong gather together against Him—they are united in their rebellion against the law of God.

The gathering of God's people is now in progress, though a final effort will be made just before probation closes to gather all of God's people out of Babylon. Rev. 18:4. The work of gathering the tares for the burning is now in progress, Matt. 13:30; 7T. 84; 5T. 384, though at the end the final effort is put forth. Rev. 14:18-20.

Both gatherings are now in progress. EW. 88, 89; 5T. 216. It is by the time of the 6th plague that the wicked have **"fully united with Satan in his warfare against God."**

The assembling of the heathen—the unprepared; the non-Israelites—to the valley of Jehoshaphat—the valley of Judgment—does not only refer to the future, for the words of V. 14 which read: "Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision" are quoted in 4T. 446; 6T. 406 as a present condition. The whole world is being prepared as two armies grouped under their respective flags—Satan is seeking to unite his forces under the banner of disloyalty to God's commandments and God is uniting His people under the banner of the commandments of God. This uniting of the elements of the two kingdoms is now advancing to the culmination. At Armageddon the unity is full and complete. A study of the events predicted in the Apocalypse to transpire in the closing scenes will reveal that things come to a culmination at that time. They have existed before, but matters are here brought to a head. The harvest has been maturing down through the years, but it is reaped in Armageddon. In this connection study G.C. 389, 390; 603. The message of the second angel given first in 1844 will, in the final hour of crisis, be sounded with greater power throughout the world. As the people of God are preparing for the latter rain and for the final conflict, so are the forces of evil "combining and consolidating" for that "hour of temptation which will come to try all them that dwell on the earth."

Things do not just drop suddenly out of the sky—there is always a preparation—a development before the conclusion. Throughout the Spirit of Prophecy we read:—

"Satan is **busily laying plans** for the **last mighty conflict**, when **all will take sides.**" 6T. 14.

"The agencies of evil are **combining** their forces, and **consolidating.** They are **strengthening** for the **last great crisis.**" 9T. 11.

When the final crisis comes it will be because the preparatory work has been done beforehand. Both sides—good and evil—are now preparing for "the last great crisis."

"The Spirit of God is **gradually**, but surely **being withdrawn** from the earth. Plagues and judgments are **already falling** upon the despisers of the grace of God." 9T. 11; TM. 431.



"The Spirit of God is being withdrawn. Disasters by sea and by land follow one another in quick succession . . . earthquakes and tornadoes, of destruction by fire and flood." PK. 277.

"The Spirit of God is **gradually** but surely being withdrawn." This work is not being done with precipitate action—but "**gradually**." When probation closes the Holy Spirit will be wholly withdrawn. As the judgments of God have been increasing as the Spirit of God has gradually been withdrawn, so, when the Spirit is wholly withdrawn the judgments of God fall with greater intensity. Everything then will be greatly magnified. Sin now held in check will then be unbridled. Iniquity in all of its channels of expression will be manifested as the work of demons. The development of sin is now preparing for that time of gigantic things.

As sin increases God's judgments increase until their fullness comes in the seven last plagues.

"**Already a few** of the drops of **God's wrath** have fallen upon the earth; but when the seven last plagues shall be poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation, then it will be forever too late to repent, and find shelter." 5T. 212.

"What are you doing, brethren, in the great work of **preparation**? Those who are **uniting** with the world, are **receiving** the worldly mold, and **preparing** for the mark of the beast. Those who are . . . **obeying** the truth, these are **receiving** the heavenly mold, and **preparing** for the seal of God in their foreheads. . . . Now is the time to prepare." 5T. 216.

"Satan has **long been preparing** for his final effort to deceive the world. . . . He has not yet reached the **full** accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time. Says the prophet: (Rev. 16:13, 14 is then quoted)," which shows that "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" comes as the **culmination of events which have preceded it**. The gathering mentioned in Rev. 16:14, 16, the Spirit of Prophecy has shown, means being **deceived** into **uniting** with Satan and his evil forces against God. That work of deception has been in progress for centuries.

Satan has been deceiving mankind for a "long" time; he wants "to **deceive** the world. . . . He has not yet reached the **full** accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached" by the time of the battle of Armageddon. As under the sixth plague the whole world is said to be "**gathered**" by miracle-working spirits who have **deceived** the whole world by these miracles, and that is "the **full** accomplishment of his designs," and as that work of deception is said to be the **gathering** or **uniting** of so many of the people of the world before the climax is reached at Armageddon, it demonstrates that the **gathering, brought to view** in the events of the sixth plague, **has been going on for some time**. Therefore, the gathering, pictured in Rev. 16:13, 14, 16 does not refer to some sudden military manoeuvre by nations to Megiddo, but refers to the culmination of the work of deception carried on through the years by Satan as he prepares to "**unite**" the world to "**join**" him "in his **last struggle**" against God.

"The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to **fasten them in deception**, and urge them on to **unite** with Satan in his **last struggle against the government of heaven**." GC. 623.

"The enmity of Satan against good, will be manifested **more and more**, as he brings his forces into activity in his **last** work of **rebellion**; and every soul that is not fully surrendered to God, and kept by divine power, will form an **alliance with Satan against heaven**, and **join in battle against the Ruler of the universe**." T.M. 465.

By the time of the sixth plague "the wicked have **fully united** with Satan in his **warfare against God**." GC. 656.

## The Spirit of Prophecy and the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates.

The Spirit of Prophecy does give us the interpretation of the waters of the Euphrates, as it does with all the matters pertaining to Armageddon. The trouble is that we expect to see some definite statement urging upon us to notice that such an interpretation is the meaning of these mis-applied texts. We forget that there are many essential doctrines taught in the Bible which are not dogmatically expounded. There has always been the opportunity of the individual approach and reaction to certain Bible truths. In the very nature of God's plan for man it was best not to state some things too plainly. If one statement could be found which finally fixed the meaning of the passages considered, no opportunity for searching the Scriptures would be provided. And with the truth too clearly taught, there would be a precipitation of decision—not allowing for the growth of the character to accommodate the advancing knowledge. This line of Biblical philosophy cannot be enlarged upon at this juncture, but sufficient has been said to suggest reasons why the writers of the Bible were inspired to write as they did.

Think of how Paul's ambiguous statements concerning the law have provided plenty of scope for dishonest hearts to misinterpret Scripture without precipitation of open rebellion against God. God reads their hearts and knows that they are motivated by rebellion—but he has permitted them to find ways of deceiving their own souls, because if they did it in open defiance of God, in their hatred they would do injury to the church. Much could be said along this line. All honest hearts will be saved—by searching the Scriptures they will eventually learn the truth. John 7:17.

Mrs. E. G. White has written quite enough upon the interpretation of the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates to make it clear to those who wish to understand its true meaning. True, she has not drawn our attention to Rev. 16:12 and said, "And now here is the meaning of this verse." Even in such verses as Rev. 16:14, as we have noticed, the interpretation given in GC. 623, is in the form of a paraphrase. There is no direct attempt to draw our attention to the meaning—it is simply stated, so that honest, unbiased hearts will know the interpretation. But this is how so much of the Bible was written. Most essential principles of interpretation are not very much emphasised—if at all. Rev. 17:15 gives us the meaning of the Babylonian waters—its application in the case of other symbolic prophecies is not hinted at. The same is true of the use of the day as a symbol for a year. Ezek. 4:6. And so with many of the teachings of Scripture—they are just quietly taught, and it is left with the individual to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit making clearer to his mind the fuller significance of the things read by the connecting up of verses as he searches the Scriptures.

W. E. Howell, Secretary to the General Conference President, in an article in "The Ministry," January, 1942, says: "It is a remarkable fact that in a system **so obviously symbolical and typical** in all their appointments as were the tabernacle and the temple, the words 'symbol,' 'type,' and 'anti-type' **occur nowhere in our English Bible**. We must depend upon other terms for our understanding of a typical system."

None of the prophets of God dogmatise on a doctrine. They do not set out to argue; and with few exceptions their presentations are not appeals to logic. Very seldom do they couch their messages as theological presentations. The Word of God was written for honest hearts and spiritual minds, and with this happy combination the searcher for truth will discover sufficient of God's revelation to enable him to know the will of God for him. John 7:17.

For instance, none of the New Testament writers argue out the virgin birth of Christ. Except for the historical facts of Christ's birth by Mary, the New Testament is silent on the theme. And yet this is a vital subject, for if Christ was not born of a virgin, then He is not the Divine Son of God in that peculiar sense, which the truths of His pre-existence and His birth into this world by a virgin, bring to our minds. If he is only the offspring of Joseph, then He is only a man—good man as one may wish Him to be, but nevertheless only a man. But born of a virgin into this world then He is the Son of God with all that that dignified position connotes as the Almighty



Creator of all worlds, and possessing the essence and attributes of the Deity. There is an infinite difference between the two viewpoints—yet not one of the New Testament writers ever wrote to argue this colossal fact; the meaning; the importance; and the overwhelming necessity of this belief in such themes as the new birth when Christ's Holy Spirit reigns in our hearts, etc. Without Christ being the infinite Son of God who became incarnate in human form the whole of the Christian faith is nothing more in the ultimate than a pretty philosophy. Everything the New Testament writers wrote depended upon this most important—this vitally indispensable and glorious truth. And yet not one of them made any attempt to **prove** this necessary belief. The simple fact is that the whole edifice of Christian doctrines depends upon the virgin birth and is understood as a cardinal belief without which all the rest is like a house without a foundation. One might just as well labour to prove that a house rests upon something—the fact that a house is before us demonstrates that it rests upon something—otherwise it would not be there. Why labour to prove something which must be accepted before the rest can be believed?

The New Testament writers did write much about the virgin birth—as a necessary corollary of all that they wrote. The principle could be greatly enlarged upon in respect to what the prophets of the Bible wrote and what they omitted to demonstrate. Similarly, the Spirit of Prophecy taught many things without drawing our attention to them in the strain of a theological argument. We have seen this in regard to the theme of Armageddon—the Testimonies are full of it along the line of the positive. God's messenger has also written concerning the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates—**along the lines of the positive**. In the preceding outline it has been shown from Scriptures that the Euphrates is mentioned in Rev. 16 as Babylon's river. Ancient Babylon was built upon the river Euphrates. The "Babylon" mentioned in the Revelation is represented also as being on the symbolical "Euphrates." What the literal waters of the Euphrates were to ancient Babylon, so the waters of the symbolical Euphrates are to the symbolical Babylon. In his description of the overthrow of mystical Babylon, John borrows the imagery of the overthrow of old Babylon as given in the Old Testament.

The Revelator, in Rev. 16, etc., is describing the overthrow of modern Babylon, and it destroys the imagery he employs to refer the Euphrates to something of a local nature.

By a glance at Jer. 51:13 and Rev. 17:1 it is easily seen that John quotes from Jer. 51:13. The Annotated Paragraph Bible's comment on Jer. 51:13 (which reads, "O thou, that dwellest upon many waters") is, "The Euphrates and its numerous canals, which passed through and near the city." Hence John's allusion to the "many waters" in describing the seat of the Babylonian whore. The drying up of the waters of the Euphrates referred to in Rev. 16:12 takes us back to Jer. 50:38; 51:36; Isa. 44:27, etc.

The translators had no difficulty in locating the O.T. passages from whence John obtains this expression, for in the margin they have directed us to the texts given above. Cyrus in overthrowing the city of Babylon, and in bringing complete destruction to the Babylonian Empire, turned the waters of the River Euphrates out of their channel.

In M. Rollin's "Ancient History" we read regarding the taking of Babylon by Cyrus: "Babylon reckoned the Euphrates alone was sufficient to **render her impregnable**, and triumphed in her being so advantageously situated and **defended by so deep a river**: 'O thou that dwellest upon many waters' (Jer. 51:13) it is God Himself Who points out Babylon under this designation. And yet **that very river Euphrates shall be the cause of her ruin**." For further reference to this theme see the outline on Armageddon attached hereto, or the writer's "The Kings of the East."

The objective now before us is to ascertain the teaching of the messenger of God regarding the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates in its application to Babylon of the book of Revelation.

In "The Story of Prophets and Kings," pp. 523, 531, 532, we read: "Babylon was besieged by Cyrus. . . . But within the seemingly impregnable fortress, with its massive walls and its gates of brass, **protected by the River Euphrates** . . . the voluptuous monarch felt safe. . . . Even while he and his nobles were drinking from the sacred vessels of Jehovah . . . the Medes and the Persians, having turned the Euphrates out of its channel, were marching into the heart of the unguarded city. . . .

"In the unexpected entry of the army of the Persian conqueror into the heart of the Babylonian capital by way of the channel of the river, whose waters had been turned aside . . . the Jews had abundant evidence of the literal fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy concerning the sudden overthrow of their oppressors."

A comparison of the two Babylons—the Babylon of the Old Testament and the Babylon of the New Testament—will show clearly that the **literal** things of the Old Testament Babylon are **symbolically** employed by John in his description of the overthrow of the anti-typical Babylon. Practically all of his imagery is based upon literal factors in the Old Testament. He lifts the historical features of the past **into the realm of symbolism**.

The drying up of the waters of the Euphrates is only one of very many expressions based upon actual experiences in connection with the overthrow of ancient Babylon which have their symbolical application in the Revelation. In all these the Revelator points out something in connection with the work and doom of Babylon which is congruous to the overthrow of spiritual Babylon as was the actual case in the overthrow of literal Babylon. Consequently we look for something analogous to the waters of the Euphrates being turned out of their course, thus taking away Babylon's protection, followed by her complete destruction at the hands of a triumphant conqueror.

In the extract from "The Story of Prophets and Kings" given above we observe that Babylon was a "seemingly impregnable fortress . . . **protected** by the River Euphrates." In the extract from Rollin's "Ancient History" we notice that "Babylon reckoned the **Euphrates** alone was sufficient to render her **impregnable**, and triumphed in her being so advantageously situated and **defended** by so deep a river . . . And yet that very River Euphrates shall be **the cause of her ruin**."

In the extract given previously from the pen of Christopher Wordsworth the River Euphrates is referred to as "the glory and **bulwark** of Babylon."

The comment from the Commentary by Jamieson, Faussett, and Brown said, "The drying up of the Euphrates expresses the same thing as the **ten kings stripping, eating, and burning the whore**." In Rev. 17:15 is given the explanation of the waters upon which in V. 1 the Babylonian whore is represented as sitting. The burning of the whore is mentioned in the very next verse (16). Thus the waters of Babylon upon which sits the Babylonian whore (which in Rev. 16:12 are said to be dried up as the waters of the Euphrates were turned aside preparatory to ancient Babylon's complete and final overthrow) will no longer support her. As the Euphrates "the glory and **bulwark** of Babylon"—that by which she was "**defended**," that which "**protected**" her, was the very "**cause of her ruin**" (God's judgment upon Babylon caused Cyrus to turn the waters of the Euphrates out of their channel, and thus the river which hitherto had been Babylon's glory and bulwark, then became the avenue for her destruction), so the very "people, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" which have hitherto supported, protected, defended Babylon **will be the means of her destruction**. This is what the Bible teaches, and this also is precisely what the Spirit of Prophecy teaches.

The kings which "have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast," and who will "agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast" (Rev. 17:12, 13, 17) are the very ones who "shall **hate the whore**, and shall **make her desolate** and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." Rev. 17:16.

Babylon refers to the false system of religion promulgated by false shepherds; the kings represent the civil authorities and the ordinary civilian population who, trusting in the power of their spiritual advisers, believe that they are safe thereby. That trust and confidence is to be shattered by circumstances produced by God's intervention. Once the religious leaders are unmasked before those who have trusted in them, without the Spirit of God to hold in check the passions of men, the populace, maddened into a boundless fury because they have been robbed of eternal life by the pretentious claims of the false shepherds whom they trusted, will turn and rend them, as Rev. 17:16 predicts, and as is plainly declared in the Spirit of Prophecy.

Religious leaders who will lead the multitudes in their deception to "war" against God, and His people, will be the object of the hatred of the lost multitude. This is the teaching of the Spirit of Prophecy as the following extracts will prove:—



"I saw that the **priests** who are leading on their flock to death are soon to be arrested in their dreadful career. The plagues of God are coming, but it will not be sufficient for the **false shepherds** to be tormented with one or two of these plagues. God's hand at that time will be stretched out still in wrath and justice, and will not be brought to Himself again until His purposes are fully accomplished, and the hireling priests are led to worship at the feet of the saints, and to acknowledge that God has loved them because they held fast the truth and kept God's commandments, and until all the unrighteous ones are destroyed from the earth." EW. 124.

In this extract we observe that **before the end comes the false spiritual leaders will be exposed** as having led their flocks to their death, and that they will acknowledge their error, **after which**, all the wicked are destroyed.

Thus before the final overthrow of the Babylonian system, the waters of Babylon—that which supports her—are turned out of their course and no longer flow along the Euphratean channel to the glory of Babylon.

"Many of the wicked were greatly enraged, as they suffered the effects of the plagues. It was a scene of fearful agony. Parents were bitterly reproaching their children, and children their parents, brothers their sisters, and sisters their brothers. Loud wailing cries were heard in every direction, 'It was you who kept me from receiving the truth which would have saved me from this awful hour.' **The people turned upon their ministers** with bitter hate, and reproached them, saying, 'You have not warned us. You told us that all the world was to be converted, and cried, Peace, peace, to quiet every fear that was aroused. You have not told us of this hour; and those who warned us of it, you declared to be fanatics and evil men, who would ruin us.' Their suffering was tenfold greater than that of their people." Ibid. 282.

"The minister who sacrificed truth to gain the favour of men, now discerns the character and influence of his teachings . . . now in the wretched, lost souls around him, he beholds the harvest. Saith the Lord . . . 'Woe be unto **the pastors** that destroy and scatter the sheep of My pasture' . . . Behold, I will visit upon you the evil of your doings.' 'Howl, ye **shepherds**, and cry; and wallow yourselves in the ashes, ye **principal of the flock**; for the days for slaughter and your dispersions are accomplished; . . . and **the shepherds** shall have no way to flee, nor the principal of the flock to escape.' (Jer. 8:11; Ezek. 13:22; Jer. 23:1, 2; 25:34, 35, margin.) Ministers and people see that they have not sustained the right relation to God . . .

"**The people see that they have been deluded.** They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but **all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers.** Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God, and to persecute those who keep it holy. Now, in their despair, **these teachers confess before the world their work of deception.** **The multitudes are filled with fury.** 'We are lost' they cry, 'and you are the cause of our ruin'; and **they turn upon the false shepherds.** The very ones that once admired them most, will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for **their destruction.** **The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies.** Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed . . .

"The work of **destruction begins** among those who have professed to be the **spiritual guardians of the people.** **The false watchmen are the first to fall.**" GC. 654-657.

Thus we see the fulfilment of both Rev. 16:12 and Rev. 17:16, for **the waters of the Babylonian Euphrates represent "the peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues"** (Rev. 17:15) **upon which the whore sits** (Rev. 17:1).

The waters of the Euphrates which had been the glory, bulwark, and protection of Babylon, were turned out of their channels by the kings from the east, and thus no longer supported Babylon as they had done previously. The very river which had been the glory and protection of Babylon became the means of its destruction. In the anti-type, the waters of the Euphrates ("**peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues, upon which the whore sat**, Rev. 17:1, 15) are turned from their channels, and **no longer protect and support Babylon**, for the populace, seeing that they have been cheated out of eternal life through the teachings of their spiritual leaders, **are the very means of the destruction of the false shepherds.**

Cyrus, and his associate kings from the east, waited until the waters of the Euphrates had been deflected from the river bed—"that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared" before they marched into the heart of Babylon to bring about its complete overthrow. So Christ and His angels, and the retinue of saints who accompany Him at the time of His second advent, will not be seen in the eastern heavens **before this exposure of the false shepherds** takes place. When the waters of Babylon, which hitherto had given her such support and protection, are turned from the usual Euphratean bed; when the people by God's overruling providences see that they have been deceived by their religious leaders, and then turn on them in fury, "**the way of the Kings of the east**" is "**prepared.**" Just as God plans, before the destruction of Satan at the end of the thousand years, that Satan will acknowledge his rebellion before all those whom he has deceived into rebellion against God (GC. 669-672) so God will not send Jesus to the earth (Acts 3:20)—"the way of the kings of the east" is not "**prepared**"—until God's providences bring about the exposure of the deceptions practised by the religious leaders, and their acknowledgment of these deceptions before all, and the voluntary rejection, and destruction, by the populace of their false shepherds. In all this God's immaculate wisdom is manifested. Satan's accusations against Him has necessitated the acknowledgment by all parties that His ways are "just and true" (Rev. 15:3). "I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, **every tongue shall swear.**" Isa. 45:23. God will not send His Son to the earth until this confession has been made by the false shepherds who have misled their flocks to believe that by enforcing the mark of the beast, world conditions would improve, but, which, instead provoked the wrath of God and produced a world of misery.

When the false leaders of religion have acknowledged their terrible work of deception they, naturally, no longer are supported by those whom they have deceived—instead that which previously had been their bulwark, protection and support, then becomes the very means of their destruction. Thus the type is fully met by its antitype.

Despite the clarity of the facts presented there may be those who will reason that the "sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great River Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up," and as those waters represented the people, then the plague was a judgment upon the people, and not upon the leaders. But that contention loses sight of **the reason why** the waters of the Euphrates are dried, namely, "that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared." The kings of the east are to come to bring **complete destruction to the entire Babylonian system**—the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates **only opens up the way for this to be done.** So that the judgment upon the waters of the Euphrates is only the preparatory work to the greater destruction to follow. Also it needs to be kept in mind that the extracts from the Spirit of Prophecy given above direct us to the fearful agony of heart and mind which is endured by the deceived populations at this time, and how, after they have destroyed their spiritual leaders, they then turn on each other and commence a wholesale slaughter of one another. Thus the judgment of God is reducing the depth of the waters of the Euphrates as Christ and His royal hosts are descending the eastern heavens to bring complete destruction to Babylon, just as the Euphrates ran lower and yet lower while Cyrus and the other kings from the east were marching into the heart of Babylon to bring about its complete overthrow. Again the type meets its antitype.

**Before the exposure of the false shepherds the church will be tested to the full, and Christ will not come—the way will not be prepared for Him to come—until this has been accomplished.** The following extracts from the Spirit of Prophecy will show that before Christ comes the church will be surrounded by the enemy, and when there will seem no way of escape, God intervenes and delivers His people by His mighty wonders **which bring about the exposure of the false shepherds.** Then the way of the kings of the east is prepared.

"The people were at liberty after a certain time to put them to death . . . angels in the form of men of war fought for them. Satan wished to have the privilege of **destroying the saints of the Most High** . . . Soon I saw the **saints suffering great mental anguish.** They seemed **surrounded by the wicked inhabitants of the earth.** Every appearance was against them . . . a mass of evil angels, hurrying on the **wicked to slay the saints** . . . It was an hour of fearful, terrible agony to the saints . . . no possibility of their escape . . . The angels longed to deliver them, but they must wait a little longer; **the people of God must drink of the cup**, and be baptized with the



baptism . . . **God was to manifest His mighty power, and gloriously deliver His saints** . . . If the wicked were permitted to **slay the saints**, Satan and all his evil hosts, and all who hate God, would be gratified. And oh, what a triumph it would be for his satanic majesty, to have power, in the closing struggle, over those who had so long waited to behold Him Whom they loved! . . . It was midnight that **God chose to deliver His people**. As the wicked were mocking around them, suddenly the sun appeared, shining in his strength . . . **signs and wonders followed** in quick succession . . . there was one clear place of settled glory, whence came **the voice of God like many waters**, shaking the heavens and the earth. There was a mighty earthquake . . . Soon appeared the great white cloud." EW. 283-286.

"The voice of God like many waters" is a quotation from Ezek. 43:3, and as, in Ezek. 43-2 "the glory of the God of Israel **came from the way of the east**," so God's servant saw Christ's cloud of glory coming from the east. EW. 15, 286; GC. 640. The coming of the kings from the east, or the sunrising, follows the deliverance of the saints by the mighty wonders God performs in accomplishing this deliverance.

#### AN ILLUSTRATION FROM ISA. 8: 7, 8 OF THE FLOODING AND OF THE DRYING UP OF THE WATERS OF THE EUPHRATES.

The wicked will surround the church as the proud, and blasphemous Assyrians planned to surround Jerusalem, when they were pictured by the prophet Isaiah as **the overflowing of the Euphrates**. To that remarkable deliverance of God's people we must now turn because their imminent peril at the hands of the cruel Assyrians was represented as an inundation of Judea by the waters of the Euphrates.

In Isa. 8:7, 8 the reference to the River Euphrates is that of the Assyrians coming from their own parts and **invading Israel and Judah**:—"The Lord bringeth up upon them the **waters of the river, strong and many**, even the king of Assyria, and all his glory: and he shall come up over all his channels, and go over all his banks. And he shall pass through Judah; he shall **overflow** and go over, he shall **reach even to the neck**; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, **O Immanuel**."

It is true that Assyria is represented by the River Euphrates—but that is only part of the story, for it is **employed to illustrate the Assyrians invading Israel and Judah**. The Assyrians were represented by the overflowing of the Euphrates—"the waters of the river," because they were "strong and many."

"**The Assyrians** are called **the waters of the river**, because they came from the River Euphrates in great multitudes, and wasted and destroyed the nations and the countries whithersoever they came. (V. 8). The Assyrian army ravaged the whole of the land of Judea in a rapid and resistless manner (where Immanuel was born, lived, and died), up to Jerusalem the capital." Brown's Bible.

"**The waters of the Euphrates**, great, rapid, and impetuous; **the image of the Babylonian empire**, which God threatens to bring down like a **mighty flood** upon all these apostates of both kingdoms." Dr. Clarke.

At the head of Isa. 8, Dr. Clarke's Commentary has:

"Israel . . . is threatened to be overflowed by the great river of Assyria, manifestly alluding by this strong figure the conquests of Tiglath-pileser and Shalmaneser over that kingdom, 5-7. The invasion of the kingdom of Judah by the Assyrians under Sennacherib foretold, v. 8."

Dr. Clarke's comment on "He shall **reach even to the neck**" is, "He compares Jerusalem, says Kinchi, to the head of the human body. As when the waters come up to a man's neck, he is **very near drowning** (for a little increase of them would go over his head); so the king of Assyria coming to Jerusalem was like a flood reaching to the neck—the whole country was overflowed, and the capital was in imminent danger. Accordingly, the Chaldee renders **reaching the neck by reaching to Jerusalem**."

Under Sennacherib the Assyrians, indeed, did invade the whole of the typical land (**all these things** happened unto them for **types**: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Cor. 10:11, margin) and were about to destroy Jerusalem, just as is pictured of Israel's enemies in such prophecies as Ezek. 38, 39; Joel 3; Zech. 14; Rev. 20:8, 9; etc. And it was through "Immanuel" (Isa. 8:8; 7:14), "God with us" (Matt. 1:23), (given in the Var. Bible on Isa. 7:14, "God (is) with us"), that Jerusalem and its inhabitants did not fall before the "strong and many" murderous Assyrians.

When the waters of the Euphrates overflowed its banks into the land of Israel God's intervention dried up those **invading** waters—the destruction of Sennacherib's army (Isa. 37:33-36; 2 Kings 19:32-35.) God's people were nearly drowned by the inundating flood—only a slight rise of the invading stream and they would have perished. But that is just where God took charge—the waters of the river, great and strong, were dried up by the slaughter of the army thus represented.

Thus the Euphrates in Isa. 8 symbolizes the **invading hosts of Assyria seeking to overthrow God's people in Jerusalem**. When that same river is employed in Rev. 16 in connection with Babylon it has a similar application to that in Isa. 8. The river Euphrates—"the **image of the Babylonian empire**"—Dr. Clarke—therefore, in Rev. 16, refers to the "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues" "where the whore (Babylon) sitteth," who will, as in the type, emerge from their land of Babylon to overflow into the land of Israel and threaten to destroy the people of God. As the **invading** flood of Assyrians was dried up by the intervention of Immanuel ("God is with us") Who is ever with Israel, so the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates in Rev. 16:12 can symbolize that the people of Babylon will be frustrated of their design to destroy the people of God.

Under the sixth plague, God's judgment does not destroy all the wicked, any more than the destruction of Sennacherib's **invading** army did not mean the **entire annihilation** of the Assyrian **nation**—but **only those actively engaged in the act of destroying** God's people. Under the sixth plague, by God's intervention, those who are bent on the destruction of the remnant will be arrested in their evil design. As Cyrus turned the waters of the Euphrates out of their course; so the persecutors of the church, by God's intervention, are turned from their unholy purpose of doing the bidding of the Babylonian leaders, and, instead, bring about the destruction of their false shepherds, and then turn to slay each other.

As the Lord intervened at the last moment to save Jerusalem falling before the invading Assyrians, so God's intervention will come at the last moment to save His remnant church. Just as then the people of God had no way of escape, except as God intervened in an extraordinary manner, so the remnant will have no way of escape, but for God's judgments to be made manifest on behalf of His people. The persecuting, threatening waters will not destroy His people. But Christ will not come until the church has been faced with certain destruction.

In the extract given above from "Early Writings," pp. 283-286, we observed that the angels longed to go to the deliverance of God's people, but not until they have drunk the last bitter dregs does deliverance come. Christ does not appear in the eastern heavens until after the church has gone through this ordeal:

"Earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. . . . But the Holy One . . . will manifest His mighty power to turn their captivity. . . . Glorious will be the deliverance of those who have patiently waited for His coming . . . there will be, in different lands, a simultaneous movement for their destruction. . . . It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof . . . in every quarter companies of armed men, urged on by hosts of evil angels, are preparing for the work of death. It is now, in the **hour of utmost extremity**, that the God of Israel will interpose for **the deliverance of His people**. . . . With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of **evil men are about to rush upon their prey**, when, lo, a dense darkness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens, and seems to encircle each praying company. The **angry multitudes are suddenly arrested**. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. . . . It was midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. . . . Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. . . . In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying: 'It is done.' (Rev. 16:17.) That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, 'such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great.' (Rev. 16:18.)"



Then follows a graphic portrayal of the terrible judgments of God upon the wicked who have surrounded His people to destroy them. Keep in mind that this is the Spirit of Prophecy's comment upon Rev. 16.

"Babylon the Great hath come in remembrance before God, 'to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath,' Rev. 16:19, 21. . . . Fierce lightnings leap from the heavens, enveloping the earth in a sheet of flame. Above the roar of thunder, voices, mysterious and awful, declare the doom of the wicked. The words spoken are not comprehended by all; but they are distinctly **understood by the false teachers**. Those who a little before were so reckless, so boastful and defiant, so exultant in their cruelty to God's commandment-keeping people, are now **overwhelmed** with consternation, and shuddering in fear. Their wails are heard above the sound of the elements . . . men are supplicating for mercy, and grovelling in abject fear. . . .

"A marvellous change has come over those who have held fast their integrity in the very face of death. They have been **suddenly delivered** from the dark and terrible tyranny of men transformed to demons. . . .

"The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least, have a new conception of truth and duty. . . . They find that **they have been fighting against God**. (Rev. 16:14.)

"**Soon there appears in the east** a small black cloud, about the size of a man's hand. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour. . . . **Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror**. . . . 'in righteousness He doth judge and make war.' And 'the armies in Heaven follow him'." GC. 634-640.

**This is the Spirit of Prophecy comment upon Rev. 16.** While no mention is made of the drying up of the Euphrates making way for the kings of the east to come, yet **the application of this in the experience of the Babylonian persecutors of the church is very evident**. The waters upon which the Babylonian whore sitteth are said to be "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." (Rev. 17:1, 15.) These people are the persecutors of God's people. The church is faced with death—the flooding of the Assyrian murderers is at its height; the Euphrates waters have reached to the neck (to use the illustration afforded in Isa. 8:7, 8), when **suddenly God intervenes to deliver His people** by mighty tokens. The religious leaders recognize their meaning. They make their confession of having deluded their followers. The false shepherds become the subject of attack at the hands of those who previously supported them. The waters of the Euphrates no longer are the glory, bulwark, and the protection of Babylon. Instead they become the means of the destruction of the leaders of Babylon. The wicked then turn on each other, and then ensues a work of wholesale slaughter. (Zech. 14:13; 1 Sam. 14:15, 16; Judges 7:22; 2 Chron. 20:23; Ezek. 38:21; etc.) This drying up of the Euphrates is in progress as Jesus, with the heavenly retinue—the Kings from the East—come to bring about the complete overthrow of Babylon. But He will not come until the church has faced certain death and stood true under this severe test.

His coming from the east is predicted in Ezek. 43:2, and plainly stated by the servant of God to follow the arresting of the throngs of the wicked who surround the saints to slay them.

The deliverance of God's people and the overthrow of the attack upon His church is coupled in the Scriptures, and the Spirit of Prophecy, with the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates, and the resultant battle of Armageddon. In GC. 636, Rev. 16:17, where are found the words, "It is done," **follows the deliverance of the church, and the arresting of the angry multitudes in their murderous attempts on the church**. So one naturally concludes that as Rev. 16:17 is interpreted in GC. 636 as following the deliverance of the church, and the arresting of the murderous designs of the hordes of Babylon, the exposure of the false shepherds, who admit their terrible work of deception, with the consequent slaughter of the leaders of Babylon, followed by fratricidal slaughter—that these constitute the fulfilment of Rev. 16:12 regarding the waters of Babylon ceasing to be the "bulwark" and "protection" of Babylon, and the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates as the Kings come from the East to bring about the complete destruction of Satan's system at Armageddon.

**This is the interpretation set forth in the Spirit of Prophecy, and it is the only one which is in harmony with the Scriptures.**

The Euphrates is referred to as "the flood" in Joshua 24:2, 3, 14, 15. In Rev. 13:7; Dan. 7:21, 25 we are informed that the persecution of the saints in the dark ages was a "war." "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints." "And it was given unto him to make war with the saints." This "war with the saints" is stated in Rev. 12:15, 16 to be "the flood."

By placing together Rev. 13:7 and Rev. 12:17 we observe: "make war with the saints," "went to make war with the remnant of her seed." Now as the "war" of Rev. 13:7 is stated in Rev. 12:15, 16 to be "the flood" so the term "the flood" would also be descriptive of the final phase of the "war" over the Sabbath question. The waters of the Euphrates—"the flood"—the waters upon which Babylon sits (Rev. 17:1, 15) will flood over the people of God as did the flooding of the Euphrates in the days of the Assyrians. (Isa. 8:7, 8.) But as then God will deliver His people by destroying their persecutors.

The prophet Daniel predicted the downfall of the Jewish nation and of Jerusalem their beloved capital city. He said: "And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood." (Dan. 9:26.) God's inspired messenger has connected up this "flood" of Roman soldiers which surrounded Jerusalem (and which, to the watching disciples, was the last sign before the destruction of that proud city) with the enforcement of Sunday laws as the last sign before the close of human probation, followed by the destruction of the world. (See 5T, pp. 451, 464; GC., pp. 26, 37, 38.)

As the literal Jewish nation was attacked by Rome, whose army, made up of many nationalities, came like a "flood," so will spiritual Israel be attacked by spiritual Rome (Babylon), made up of all rebelling people, who will seek to destroy God's people in the final flooding of the Euphrates.

The figure of flooding waters is often used in Scripture to picture the invasion of a country, or an assault on certain people. (See Isa. 8:7, 8; 28:3; Jer. 46:6-8; 47:2; Dan. 9:26; 11:22; Ps. 69:14, 15; 90:5.)

Dr. Scott's comment on Isa. 8:7, 8, is noteworthy:

"This prediction has been fulfilled in the ruin of Syria and Israel; in the destruction of Sennacherib's powerful armies from the various countries; and in that of Babylon and its dependencies; and it is **equally applicable to every combination against the church of Christ**; and will be fulfilled till the last enemy shall be put under His feet. (Note Isa. 7:1-3; 54:15-17; Joel 3:9-17; Zech. 14:1-3; Rev. 16:12-16; 17:9-14; 19:11-21.)"

This eminent commentator links up the overflowing of the waters of the Euphrates of Isa. 8:7, 8, and the drying up of the waters of that river, with the prophecies of the enemies attacking the church, as is described in Isa. 54:15-17, and the other verses he quotes, which, when rightly understood, refer to the attack of the Babylonian "flood" (the people upon which the Babylonian whore sits—Rev. 17:1, 15) upon God's remnant people in the coming struggle over the Sabbath-Sunday "war." But God will pour out His judgments upon the Babylonian waters (Rev. 16:12; 17:1, 15), and then, firstly, the deluded people, seeing that they have lost eternal life through heeding the deceptive counsel of their religious leaders over the mark of the beast, turn and rend their spiritual advisers, and then turn upon each other in their maddened fury.



## The drying up of the waters of the Euphrates and the French Revolution.

The scenes of the French Revolution are to be repeated on a world-wide scale.

"And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall **hate the whore** (Babylon, v. 5) and shall make her desolate, and naked, and **shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.**" (Rev. 17:16.) This, we have seen, is the same as the drying up of the waters of the Euphrates, the river of Babylon. As the woman represents the church—the ecclesiastical leadership—this, therefore, means that the ordinary citizens will destroy those who, by their spiritual leadership, have led them to their doom.

Twice in the Scriptures the French Revolution is brought to our notice to **illustrate the conditions which will prevail during the time of trouble.** (See Dan. 11: 36-39; 12:1; and Rev. 11:7-10, 13, 14, 18.)

During the French Revolution the **clergy and religionists were the ones particularly selected by the revolutionists for destruction.** "The shootings, the drownings, the roastings of the Roman Catholic loyalists, both priests and nobles (not to speak of other injuries great, yet less atrocious), had all their prototypes in the barbarities of another age, practised under the direction of the Pope and French Papists."—"Horae Apocalypticae," vol. 3, pp. 321, 322, by Rev. E. B. Elliot, A.M.

"The blood of the saints began to be avenged. . . . But never, even under the dictation of the Abbot of Citeaux, did the counts, or knights, and the soldiers of France exercise more **atrocious cruelties** against the saints of the Most High, than those of which **churchmen and loyalists were the victims.**"—Rev. Alexander Keith in "The Signs of the Times," vol. 2, pp. 114, 115.

"The French Revolution slew as many **priests and Papists** under Louis XVI as the priests and Papists slew Protestants under Louis XIV. Simpson, and other good and great writers, have truly and justly considered that the latter slaughter was a righteous retribution for the former murders. This event sent an awful shock through the whole Empire." After mentioning the frauds and deceptions perpetrated by **religious leaders** preparatory to their slaughter in the Revolution, this writer continues: "And millions of men said, 'It is all an infernal sham, there is no God.' They rose en masse, 'Down with these monsters who have . . . villainously imposed upon our credulity.' . . . Baruel in his history of the Revolution says, '138 bishops and 64,000 curates were driven from their sees or their parishes; **all the clergy, all the religious of both sexes**, robbed of the patrimony of the church, and forced from their retreats; the temples of the Lord converted into capacious prisons for the reception of His ministers; 300 **priests slain** in one day, in one city; all the other pastors who remained faithful to their God either sacrificed or banished from their country. . . . **Such is the spectacle exhibited to the world by the French Revolution.**' . . . Just think of the whole of France being like this. . . ."—"The Apocalypse," pp. 113-115, by Pastor Allen.

The scenes of the French Revolution will be re-enacted on a far more terrible scale—particularly when the multitudes are undeceived by the **intervention of God which forces the religious leaders to acknowledge their terrible work of deceiving their trusting flocks.** In the horror of the knowledge of their lost state, and realizing that the false shepherds have led them to their doom, **they turn and destroy the leaders of religion in that horrible welter of bloodshed,** which is followed by the world-wide slaughter of Armageddon. Christ destroys the rival factions of humanity, which are all bent on mutual destruction.

The Spirit of Prophecy teaches that there will be frightful wars—9T, 14, 17, 26; 1T, 366; GC., 589; 1T., 363; 6T., 14. **But it never refers to a Palestinian conflict.** And this is where a wrong use is made of the Spirit of Prophecy. To use extracts from the Spirit of Prophecy which describes wars in "divers places," **without any specific reference to Palestine** to prove that those descriptions in the Spirit of Prophecy apply to a Palestinian conflict in supposed fulfilment of the "private interpretation" of Rev. 16:12-16, is both illogical and unfortunate.

**The Spirit of Prophecy nowhere makes reference to a Palestinian Armageddon—it** always envisages **universal** trouble and carnage.

"When God shall bid the angels loose the winds, there will be such a **scene of strife as no pen can picture.**" (6T, 408.)

The sealing, which is done before the winds blow, is not a Palestinian sealing of literal Israelites; nor a Palestinian time of trouble; but a world-wide sealing of spiritual Israel and a world-wide time of trouble. The sealing is done before the "scene of strife" commences **in order to preserve the Israel of God.** (See also Ezek. 9:4-6; etc.)

"Satan will then plunge the **inhabitants of the earth** into one **great, final trouble** . . . **all the elements of strife** will be let loose. **The whole world** will be involved in **ruin more terrible** than that which came upon Jerusalem of old . . . **strife and bloodshed** among men that are **filling the earth** with woe." (GC. 614.)

"I was shown the **inhabitants of the earth** in the utmost confusion. War, bloodshed, privation, want, famine, pestilence were abroad in the land. . . . Once more the **inhabitants of the earth** were presented before me; and again everything was in the utmost confusion. **Strife, war, bloodshed,** with famine and pestilence, **ragged everywhere.**" (1T, 268, 355, 356.)

The Spirit of Prophecy always refers to world-wide strife and bloodshed, without the mention of Megiddo; and to quote those passages to bolster up one's private views of a meeting of the nations at Megiddo is obviously to make use of those statements in a way different from that clearly indicated in the Spirit of Prophecy.

In these statements of the Spirit of Prophecy, reference is made to "**all the elements of strife.**" War is only one element of strife—other forms of strife are revolution, anarchy, capital and labour, etc. And these things are included as parts of "**all the elements of strife**" which "**spread desolation everywhere** . . . strife and bloodshed."

Two great historic landmarks are given in the Scriptures and the Spirit of Prophecy by which to present a picture of what is meant by "**all the elements of strife**" which are to "**be let loose,**" namely, the **ruin of Jerusalem** and the **French Revolution.** Quoting very briefly we notice the picture of the coming world-wide trouble as given in the Spirit of Prophecy, which is based upon the scenes of the doom which befell Jerusalem, and the horrors of the French Revolution (both of which are presented in the Scriptures themselves as typical of what will occur in a world-wide manner after the close of probation):

"**Revolt and anarchy** . . . 'The Reign of **Terror**,' Peace and happiness were banished from the homes and hearts of men. . . . **Violence and lust** held undisputed sway . . . **atrocities** . . . **scenes of horror.** **One party of Revolutionists was against another party,** and France became a **vast field for contending masses** . . . **one tumult succeeded another** . . . medley of factions . . . **mutual extermination.**" (GC., 282-288.)

The same word pictures are given of the doom of Jerusalem: "They became Satanic in their **cruelty.** In the family . . . nation, among the highest and the lowest classes alike . . . **suspicion, envy, hatred, strife, rebellion, murder.** There was **no safety anywhere.** Friends and kindreds betrayed one another. **Parents slew their children, and children their parents** . . . **opposing factions** at times united to plunder and torture their wretched victims, and again they fell upon each other's forces, and **slaughtered without mercy.** . . .

"Unhappy Jerusalem, rent by internal dissensions, the blood of her children slain by one another's hands crimsoning her streets, while alien armies beat down her fortifications and slew her men of war . . . **that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow** . . . **the doom of a world** . . . the long procession of tumults, conflicts, and revolutions, the battle of the warrior, with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood" (Isa. 9:5 is here quoted in respect to world-wide carnage of "all the elements of strife," without any reference to Megiddo!!) . . . the terrors of that day . . . **the world** will then behold (will not need to go to Megiddo to see it!), as never before, the results of Satan's rule." (GC., 36, 37.)



"All the elements of strife," which include revolutions, party strife, class warfare, the slaying of children by parents, and parents by children, etc., constitute the Spirit of Prophecy description of the coming scenes of desolation and bloodshed, and such texts as Isa. 9:5 are quoted in this connection (GC. 37, 642, 672) without any reference to Megiddo in Palestine!

"Discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife . . . everywhere there is strife and bloodshed. . . . The work of desolation begins among those who have professed to be the spiritual guardians of the people. The false watchmen are the first to fall. There is none to pity or to spare. Men, women, maidens, and little children perish together." GC., 655, 656.

Here we see when it is that this terrible work of wholesale slaughter takes place—after God's people have been delivered by the miraculous intervention of God on behalf of His people. Then the waters of the river Euphrates—Babylon's river—no longer support and protect her. The common people turn upon their "false watchmen." "The work of desolation begins among those who have professed to be the spiritual guardians of the people." Then follows the destruction at the hands of the different factions of sinful men, followed by the coming of Christ, and the complete destruction of all the wicked from the face of the earth.

In his "The Coming King," pp. 216, 218, James E. White (who was in a good position to understand the thoughts which undoubtedly were often expressed in the family life of Mrs. E. G. White), after quoting Rev. 16:14, says:

"The passions of men will be so universally wrought upon that the whole world will be involved in a vast universal struggle. In Rev. 14:20 this battlefield is spoken of as one vast winepress, with a slaughter so terrible that 'blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles'."

"The oppression of the rich will increase, and resistance of the labouring classes will be more determined and violent, until finally summoned to 'the battle of that great day of God Almighty'."

James White's application of "the battle of that great day of God Almighty" in connection with the final conflict between capital and labour, involving the whole world as the "battlefield," is in harmony with the quotations given from the Spirit of Prophecy regarding the coming scenes of strife and bloodshed, in which "all the elements of strife will be let loose." This class strife, being only one of the elements involved:

" . . . discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth" becomes "one vast field of strife . . . everywhere there is strife and bloodshed"—"the battle of that great day of God Almighty."

"And it shall come to pass in that day that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold every one against the hand of his neighbour." (Zech. 14:12, 13.) In the mad strife of their own fierce passions, and by the awful outpouring of God's unmingled wrath, fall the wicked inhabitants of the earth—priests, rulers, and people, rich and poor, high and low. 'And the slain of the Lord shall be at that day from one end of the earth even unto the other end of the earth; they shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried.' (Jer. 25:33.) At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth—consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and destroyed by the brightness of His coming." GC., 657.

After the false watchmen are destroyed by the maddened populace, the people turn on each other in one vast field of strife. This is in progress as Jesus descends the heavens to destroy those who are not already destroyed: "And the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, which proceeded out of His mouth." (Rev. 19:21.) In this way all of the enemies of God meet their doom in the awful slaughter of Armageddon which closes Satan's reign of sin. It is the prayer of the writer that all who read these lines will be on the side of Christ when He brings complete destruction to all those who have united with Satan in his warfare against the government of Heaven.

## "Should the application of the Euphrates in Rev. 9 to the Ottoman Empire determine the interpretation of the Euphrates in Rev. 16?"

Expositors of Scripture in establishing the belief that the Ottoman Empire was associated with the Euphrates in Rev. 9 merely assumed that the same power was symbolized by the Euphrates in Rev. 16. It is a natural thing to assume that, having applied a symbol in one chapter to a certain nation, the same symbol in another chapter means the same thing. But the manner in which that symbol is employed needs to be considered before reaching the final conclusion. Care needs to be exercised in the interpretation of the symbols, metaphors, or similes of Scripture according to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. For instance, a lion in Scripture is taken to represent: the Assyrians (Nah. 2:11-13); the princes of Israel (Ezek. 19:2-7); Satan (1 Pet. 5:8); Christ (Rev. 5:5); the righteous (Prov. 28:1). In each case the context shows why the same illustration is fittingly employed to represent entirely different persons. Numerous similar examples could be given.

We have a good example of the need to watch the way the Holy Spirit has used the same thing in a different application. The Greek word "Zume"—leaven—occurs 13 times in the New Testament. See Matt. 13:33; 16:6, 11, 12; Mark 8:15; Luke 12:1; 13:21; 1 Cor. 5:6, 7, 8; Gal. 5:9. From this fact some have concluded that "leaven is always used as a type of sin." See "Spiritual Arithmetic," p. 67, by R. T. Naish.

"There must be no leaven in anything which typified Christ . . . for throughout the Word it always represents evil." The Study of the Types, p. 30, by Ada R. Habershon.

Those who maintain that leaven in the Bible "always" represents evil have some grounds for their belief. But the Holy Spirit has seen fit to use the pervasive action of leaven as an illustration of the working of good, as well as the working of evil. In Lev. 2:11; 6:17; 10:12; 1 Cor. 5:6-8, etc., leaven suggests the working of evil. In Lev. 23:16, 17; Matt. 13:33; Luke 13:21, leaven is taken to represent the working of good.

"In the New Testament leaven is usually regarded as a symbol of corruption . . . In one of the parables the Saviour uses it in a good sense." A New Standard Bible Dictionary, art. "Leaven."

"Among the Jews, leaven was sometimes used as an emblem of sin . . . But in the Saviour's parable, leaven is used to represent the kingdom of heaven. It illustrates the quickening, assimilating power of the grace of God." Christ's Object Lesson, pp. 95, 96, by Mrs. E. G. White.

As a general principle leaven represents the ferment of sin working in man's nature, but here is a practical example of the necessity of studying the use which the Holy Spirit makes of a certain symbol each time it is employed in the Scriptures. By jumping to the conclusion that leaven "always" represents "evil," some expositors interpret Matt. 13:33 differently from those who see that the Spirit of God is using leaven there in regards to the pervasiveness—the working—of the gospel.

In studying the Bible we must take into account the context, and other factors, when applying our interpretation of even the same word, or expression, in each particular passage of Scripture. This is also illustrated by the following extract, which is part of a comment upon the two witnesses of Rev. 11, written by the Rev. John Cumming, D.D.:—

"The name assigned to the persons here described is 'witnesses.' The word witness is the translation of a Greek word, 'Martus,' which Greek word is the parent of our common word 'martyr.' . . .

"The two witnesses, I am satisfied, are not books but persons: my reasons for believing so are, I think, most satisfactory. First, the word 'martus' occurs in the Bible



exactly thirty-four times. **In thirty-three of these it means a person; why change its meaning in the thirty-fourth?** Now this alone seems to me conclusive: it is never once applied to a book, but in **every case to a person.** "Apocalyptic Sketches," pp. 172, 173.

From a superficial view the contention of this devout commentator seems unanswerable. But the Doctor has overlooked this simple fact: the other occasions on which the word "martus" is employed in the New Testament, is in connection with the plain narration of historical facts, in which symbols are not used. But in the Apocalypse we are dealing with symbols. In this symbol of the Revelation, **the Old and New Testaments are personified**—and under the **symbol** of two persons they are martyred.

Another illustration of the need for studying the different settings in which the same or similar expressions occur is afforded by the use of the word "Sabbath" in Col. 2: 13-17. T. H. Scambler, B.A., Dip. Ed., in his "The Sabbath or the Lord's Day?" p. 18, says:—

"How does the Adventist meet this teaching? He says the word Sabbath here does not mean the weekly Sabbath. The word occurs sixty times in the New Testament, and in fifty-nine it certainly means the weekly Sabbath, but here it means something else! And the ground for this astonishing claim? Simply that it does not suit Seventh-day Adventist doctrine to let it mean the weekly Sabbath."

The word Sabbath does occur 60 times in the New Testament, and 59 times we say it refers to the 7th day Sabbath, and this once to the annual Sabbaths of the Mosaic regime. To those who will not get down to basis principles in Biblical exegesis, it appears conclusive that we are simply shutting our eyes to that which is most obvious to them. The assumption that the Euphrates in Rev. 16 has the same meaning as in Rev. 9 is based on no more solid basis than the unwarranted claim made by T. A. Scambler. Dr. Albert Barnes, speaking of Col. 2:13-17, says:—

"Or of the Sabbath days (Greek, 'of the Sabbaths') . . . There is, doubtless, **reference to those days (annual festivals) in this place**, as the word is used in the plural number. **There is not the slightest reason** to believe that he meant to teach that one of the ten commandments had ceased to be binding on mankind. . . . But the use of the term in the plural number, **and the connection**, show that he had his eye on the great number of days which were observed by the Hebrews as festivals, as a part of their ceremonial and typical law, and not to the moral law or the ten commandments."

As Dr. Barnes has stated **the connection** will show the use of the word, expression, or symbol in each instance it is employed.

The sea is used in Scripture as a representation of: the righteous (Isa. 48: 18); the wicked (Isa. 57:20); a Christian lacking faith (James 1:6); seething masses of people (Dan. 7:2, 3; Rev. 17:1, 15). Illustrations could be greatly multiplied, but the exceedingly limited size of this brief outline will only permit of the briefest mention of a few out of very many such instances. A woman in Bible symbols represents a church. But it would not do to **assume** that the woman of Rev. 12 represents the same church as the woman of Rev. 17. The setting of the prophetic outline in each case reveals that the woman of Rev. 12 is not the same as the woman of Rev. 17. Similarly, the factors involved show that the Euphrates of Rev. 16 is not to be interpreted in the same way as it is intended in Rev. 9.

Some old interpreters taught that the seven last plagues covered practically the same ground as did the seven trumpets. The trumpets and the plagues were said to bring to view the Ottoman Empire and the Papacy. The Ottoman Empire, they declared, was symbolized by the Euphrates in the trumpets, and also in the seven plagues of Rev. 16. Space forbids the inclusion of extracts from the pens of earlier commentators in which these teachings are stated. They concluded that the seven last plagues pictured the judgments of God upon the apostasy of the **West**—the Papacy—and the Mohammedan power of the **East**. The first five plagues were said to be fulfilled in the history of the Papacy, and the sixth—the drying up of the Euphrates—the dissolution of the Turkish power, then being in process of fulfilment.

There are **some** similarities between the seven trumpets and the seven vials, or plagues, and it was because of this outward similarity, that some of the commentators **assumed** that the same things were meant in both prophecies. But in prophetic understanding **all** the facts must harmonize.

Four of the trumpets are limited by John's use of the term of the "third," whereas the plagues are poured out upon the beast and worshippers of the Beast and his image—wherever the Sabbath of God is rejected, and, in the rejection of God's message, Sunday is deliberately chosen in its stead. In the second trumpet only a "third part of the sea"

is afflicted, whereas in the second plague **"every** living soul died in the sea." Instead of a comparison of the trumpets and the plagues proving that they are same, they are thus seen to be speaking of different circumstances—the trumpets are restricted to certain localities of the old Roman Empire, while the plagues comprehend the different parts of the whole world.

In the third trumpet the water becomes bitter, but no mention of blood—while the third plague deals with water being turned into blood. Turning the water bitter in a restricted area is not the same as turning the water of the world into blood. In the fourth trumpet the sun is smitten and darkness follows, whereas in the fourth plague the sun is not smitten and thus made to go out, but just the opposite—the sun grows in power and men are scorched by it. It seems remarkable how a sun smitten and gone out, could be classed the same as the sun growing more powerful; but such comes by looking at the outward appearances, and assuming that the same is meant, when a careful analysis reveals that the dissimilarities prove that the same events are not being considered.

The fifth trumpet speaks of the pit in reference to the rise of Mohammedanism in the Arabian desert, whereas the fifth plague deals with the Papacy, and its kingdom. The sixth trumpet deals with the limited **enlarging** of the powers of the Ottoman Empire, whereas the sixth plague predicts the **drying up** of the Euphrates, **which will be as world-wide as Babylon which is situated upon the Euphrates.**

In both the seven trumpets and the seven plagues we see mention of the following:—

Trumpets.	Plagues.
1st. The earth, Rev. 8:7.	The earth, Rev. 16:2.
2nd. The sea, Rev. 8:8.	The sea, Rev. 16:3.
3rd. Rivers and fountains of waters, Rev. 8:10.	Rivers, and fountains of waters, Rev. 16:4.
4th. The sun, Rev. 8:12.	The sun, Rev. 16:8.
5th. The darkening of the sun and the air, Rev. 9:2.	The darkening of the kingdom of the beast, Rev. 16:10.
6th. The great River Euphrates, Rev. 9:14.	The great River Euphrates, Rev. 16:12.
7th. Voices in heaven, lightnings, voices, thunders, earthquake and great hail, Rev. 11:15, 19.	Voices from the throne, lightnings, voices, thunders, and a great hail, Rev. 16:17, 18, 21.

From the superficial likeness of **some** of the features of the seven trumpets and the seven plagues, some expositors **assumed** that they covered the same ground, and that because of this assumption the Ottoman Empire was prefigured in both by the Euphrates. They did not try to prove this point—they simply took it for granted. In this same way the early disciples, and the Adventists in 1844, made their errors in expecting things which did not occur.

Why have we not followed others in interpreting the plagues and the trumpets as setting forth the same things? Why do we not give **the same features** used in each of the trumpets and the plagues as set out above (except the seventh) the same application? Because other features enter into the consideration and cause us to give **the same things** in Rev. 16 a **wider meaning** than was intended in the trumpets. In the trumpets they are limited to the territory of the old Roman Empire; whereas the plagues affect different parts of the whole world.

The puzzle is not why we have given a different, or wider, application of the **same designations** in the plagues than in the trumpets—for that is the only thing we can do in the light of the third angel's message—but why **one** of them—the **Euphrates**—is applied to the same power, and in the same limited way as in the trumpets, in **contradistinction to our application of the other features.**



The things mentioned in the trumpets which are also mentioned in the plagues, as set forth above, we apply differently, not for what they are in themselves, but **because of what is associated with them.** It is their **connection** which shows the manner of their application.

The "earth" mentioned in the first trumpet is limited to portions of Europe, whereas the "earth" mentioned in the first plague includes, not only the whole of Europe, but also every country on the globe—for that is where "the mark of the beast" and worshippers of "the image of the beast" will be found. 6T., p. 18. The "sea" of the second trumpet is limited to the Mediterranean, whereas the "sea" of the second plague is not limited to any particular part on the globe. "The rivers and fountains of waters" mentioned in the third trumpet are limited in their application to certain regions in Europe, whereas "the rivers and fountains of waters" of the third plague have no such limitation.

The symbolic "sun" of the fourth trumpet is limited in its symbolical application to Italy, or in its greatest extent, to that portion of Roman dominion which still existed in Western Europe at the termination of the reign of Augustulus in 476 A.D. But the sun of the fourth plague affects "the earth." G.C., p. 628.

The figurative darkness of the fifth trumpet was limited primarily to the Arabian desert, though, later, in a secondary sense, it is not so restricted, but in its widest scope it does not have a world-wide meaning. The literal "darkness" of the fifth plague falls not only on the "seat, or throne of the beast," but also on "his kingdom." Then we come to the Euphrates in the sixth trumpet, which is there limited to the extent of the Ottoman Empire in the region of the Euphrates.

From this examination of the factors which are both mentioned in the trumpets and the plagues, namely, the "earth," "sea," "rivers and fountains of waters," "sun," "darkness" and the "Euphrates" we learn that in the trumpets they are restricted in their application to certain national localities, but the same features in the plagues are used in connection with matters affecting different parts of the world. If we limit the interpretation of the "Euphrates" in the plagues to the **same areas** as in the trumpets we, in that act, do with the "Euphrates" **what we do not do with any other of the features which are mentioned in both the trumpets and the plagues.**

In Rev. 9 the Euphrates is used in connection with the final overthrow of the **literal** Roman empire, in Rev. 16 the Euphrates is employed in association with the events which bring about the complete destruction of world-wide **spiritual** Babylon.

In the seven trumpets the factors mentioned in the prophetic description are necessarily limited, because of their connection with literal, **national** Rome. The sun, moon, and stars mentioned in the trumpets are there employed as **national** symbols of a very restricted character. The bottomless pit of Rev. 9:1, 2, 11, also has a limited application because of the national setting; whereas in Rev. 20:1-7 it refers to the whole world, which is the universal domain of **Babylon.** There are other factors mentioned in the trumpets which are **limited** (because **national**) in their application, which, when applied, in Rev. 16, in connection with the overthrow of **spiritual** Babylon, have a **world-wide meaning.** But space forbids further consideration of this theme.

## The Triple Application of the Prophecies Pertaining to Israel, and the Points of the Compass Mentioned in the Predictions Concerning Israel.

### "THE DISPENSATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT"

#### "CHRIST IS THE CENTRE OF ALL TRUE DOCTRINE." CT. 453.

In the visible and material creation, as well as in the moral world, we see the evidence of laws, or principles. "God is not the Author of Confusion." "Order is Heaven's first law." The violation of the laws of God—whether in the spiritual or physical realms—has resulted in man's lost equilibrium; chaos; and suffering. One of the major lessons learned from the terrible consequences of sin is that God's laws must be obeyed in order to enjoy peace, and harmonious blessedness. The world which has ignored or thrust aside the governing principles of God is termed by Christ in the Apocalypse—"Babylon."

But God is not only seeking to obtain His children's co-operation in regard to the moral and physical laws, but also in heeding the principles by which the Scriptures may be "rightly divided." 2 Tim. 2:15. The Spirit of Prophecy is established upon the true application of Divinely-appointed rules of interpretation—"the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets." 1 Cor. 14:32. True prophets work upon the principle of the fulfilment of what their predecessors have written—Matt. 5:17, 18. The statement in Test. to Min., p. 511, that we are living in "the dispensation of the Holy Spirit" brings to view principles of Biblical exegesis, the proper understanding of which throws considerable light upon some important eschatological prophecies.

"Now faith is the substance of **things** hoped for, the evidence of **things** not seen." Heb. 11:1. "We walk by faith, not by sight." 2 Cor. 5:7. There is a contrast in Scripture between "the **things** that are in the world" (1 John 2:15-17) which can be seen by the "natural" eye, and "the **things** not seen." In Col. 1:16-20 Paul outlines the eight "things" of the eternal kingdom: "For by Him were all **things** created, that are heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible . . . all **things** were created by Him, and for Him. And He is before all **things**, and by Him all **things** consist . . . that in all **things** He might have the pre-eminence . . . by Him to reconcile all **things** unto Himself; by Him, I say, whether they be **things** in earth, or **things** in heaven." It is these hoped-for **things**, which though not seen by the natural eye, are seen by the eye of faith. "While we look not at the **things** which are seen, but at the **things** which are not seen: for the **things** which are seen are temporal; but the **things** which are not seen are eternal." 2 Cor. 4:18. The visible things of this temporal existence are thus set forth in contrast to the invisible things of the spiritual realms. The invisible things which are seen by the natural eye are the "real" things—they will endure throughout eternity; whereas the visible things which captivate the natural eye are not the real things, and will soon pass away. Consequently in our study of the Bible in which the eternal things are constantly held before us we must ever watch for the invisible and spiritual things. The man of the world, lives for the things of time and sense—the material things—and does not develop the eye for discerning spiritual things. "The natural man receiveth not the **things** of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all **things**. The **things** of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the **things** that are freely given to us of God. Which **things** also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual **things** with spiritual." No less than ten times does Paul in 1 Cor. 2 write of the **things** of God in contrast to the **things** of the world. But in contrast to worldly things the spiritual things can only be discerned by the spiritual eye, which is created by the continual operation of the Holy Spirit—especially as the Scriptures are studied. Those heavenly **things** are to be found in the Scriptures, where the Spirit has revealed them to the eye of faith—see vv. 9, 10—but they do not lie on the surface "for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the **deep things** of God."

Moses saw "Him who is invisible" (Heb. 11:27), and all the old spiritual worthies used the eye of faith in discerning the eternal realities—Heb. 11:13-16. But, nevertheless, the things of God in the Mosaic regime were represented by something material.



God selected the Jewish nation, and the land of Israel, to be the people and the place in which could be illustrated the things pertaining to the eternal kingdom. There is much more meaning in the statement given in Ps. 77:13, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary," than that in the sanctuary the plan of redemption is revealed in miniature. While the heavenly ministry of Christ is illustrated in the services of the sanctuary, we must not lose sight of the fact that Christ's work is still in progress on the earth and that the whole national regime centred in the Jewish nation in Palestine was illustrative of the work of Christ—whether in its heavenly or earthly aspects; until the ultimate banishment of sin from God's universe. "Now **all** these things happened unto them for ensamples (marg. types): and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." 1 Cor. 10:11. When this Scripture is fully comprehended a greater appreciation of ancient Israel's history and prophecies will dawn upon spiritual Israel, for in them will be read their own experiences—past and future. As Christ's miracles, when read aright, are seen to be acted parables, so the Providences of God over ancient Israel will be viewed as acted parables foreshadowing the dealings of God with His Children till the end of the conflict between Christ and Satan. The conflicts of Israel with her devil-led foes will be viewed not dispassionately, as in the reading of mere history of events long ago, but as having an important bearing upon the church till the end of time.

In reading the contest between David and Goliath the spiritual eye can see his own struggle with a stronger than he—not in the realm of the physical, but in the sphere of the spiritual. Similarly all the other records of the conflicts Israel sustained at the hands of powerful enemies led on by Satan (as well as the unfulfilled predictions concerning Israel and her foes) must be read by the Christian in exactly the same setting.

Bible students should give full weight to Paul's statement that **all** the experiences which befell national Israel, and recorded significantly by the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, and again referred to in the New Testament, were typical of events to transpire in the experience of spiritual Israel. In this light all the unfulfilled predictions concerning Israel should also be read—not as outlining events to transpire in Palestine, but of events to occur wherever spiritual Israel is found, which, in these days, is, of course, in all the world. And as the antitypical character must be spiritual in relation to the church as it was national in relation to national Israel, so the terms employed in the history of the prophecies of Israel, would be read accordingly, namely, in a spiritual, world-wide setting, and not in a national setting in relation to the literal land of Israel.

It is to "things" of this character that the New Testament writers refer when they say that the "natural" man cannot discern these "deep things" of God; he prefers to take them literally and not spiritually. But "spiritual things" are spiritually discerned." By comparing 1 Cor. 2:9, 10, 13 and Isa. 64:1-4 it is readily seen that Paul is writing of the "spiritual things" of God which are "deep," but which are "revealed unto us by His Spirit," has specific reference to this spiritual application of the Scriptures, and that, too, of the prophecies. In John 16:12-15 Christ stresses the work of the Spirit in teaching us "many things," "all things," "and He will shew you things to come," i.e., of the things of God in the prophecies. But the gracious ministry of God's Spirit would not be appreciated by the world "because it seeth Him not." John 14:17. The Christian, however, has a spiritual revelation of Christ, through the Word of God, v. 21. The world seeth with the "natural" eye, whereas the believer compares "spiritual things with spiritual," and thus to him Christ is manifested.

This spiritual vision is necessary in the understanding of the prophecies of the Bible. In the physical and national experiences of national Israel, the spiritual eye of the discerning Christian sees spiritual things. This is the significance of Paul's statement in Heb. 12:18-24, "No, you have not come near to something **material** . . . No! you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to countless hosts of angels, to the festal gathering and church of the firstborn . . . and to the God of all . . . and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant." Weymouth's Translation.

Just as anciently people came to Jerusalem to worship God so in "the dispensation of the Holy Spirit" believers are represented as coming, not to the **material** Jerusalem, but to the spiritual Jerusalem, the church—see Rev. 11:1, 2; Test. Min. 17; GC. 266, etc.

Instead of a material temple, as was the edifice erected by King Solomon, there is being erected by "a greater than Solomon" (Matt. 12:42) a "spiritual house" (1 Pet. 2:4, 5), in which a "spiritual" priesthood, offers up "spiritual sacrifices" in the midst of a "spiritual" nation. V. 9. This spiritual temple is mentioned in Acts of the Apostles, pp. 595-599; Desire of Ages, p. 413; Proph. and Kings, p. 36; Vol. 9, p. 108, etc. In these statements in the Spirit of Prophecy such prophecies as Zech. 6:12, 15; Isa. 60:10, etc., are interpreted as being fulfilled in the church—even though the predictions speak of a temple being built in Jerusalem. This "spiritual" view must ever be kept in mind in the understanding of all the prophecies concerning Israel. Thus the temple described in Ezek. 40-48 to have been built "upon a very high mountain" "in the land of Israel" (Ezek. 40: 2; 43: 12) represents the church—see Ezek. 47: 1-12; 7T. 171; 230; 6T. 277; AA. 13, 14, etc. The water of life which emerges from this spiritual temple represents the work of the third angel's message, as is taught in the Spirit of Prophecy. The tree of life along the banks of this river of life is interpreted in the Spirit of Prophecy to refer to the Bible—see MH. 66, 122, 173, 199; AA. 478, etc.

Remembering that this is "the dispensation of the Holy Spirit" causes us to apply the spiritual interpretation to these predictions, as well as to the history, of ancient Israel. And keeping the literal aspects of the national Israel before us, and the heavenly things awaiting the people of God, we see that this dispensation is the spiritual one. This "triple" application of the prophecies causes all things to fall into their respective places, which is set forth as follows:—

1. The national kingdom of God centred in Jerusalem, and pertaining to the land of Israel, in the time of the **literal** economy.
2. The Messiah's spiritual kingdom centred in **spiritual** Jerusalem, the church—embracing the world.
3. The Messiah's eternal kingdom with His seat of government centred in the New Jerusalem.

**"Christ is the Centre of All True Doctrine," "Counsels to Teachers," p. 453.**

Those who prove themselves to be "workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, **rightly dividing** the word of truth" (2 Tim. 2:15) will divide that Word with the "triple" application, and thus see that what was said of national Israel centred in old Jerusalem, is likewise applied to the church (national phraseology being sublimated in reference to the church in a spiritual sense); and then again to the kingdom of Christ, centred in the New Jerusalem. A few of the vast number of samples are:—

Isa. 54: 5. This could have been said of national Jerusalem; also of the church; and also of the New Jerusalem.

Ephes. 5: 23-33. Christ also marries the church (individuals also. Rom. 7: 1-4; Jas. 4: 4; 2 Cor. 11: 2, etc)—see also Rev. 12; MH. 356.

Rev. 21: 9; 19: 7-9; Matt. 25: 10; Luke 12: 36. Christ also marries the New Jerusalem.

Ex. 25: 31-37. There were seven lamps in the temple in Jerusalem.

Rev. 1: 12, 13, 20; 2: 1. In the church, the spiritual Jerusalem, there are seven lamps.

Rev. 4: 5. There are seven lamps burning in the temple in the New Jerusalem.

Ex. 28: 39-42. Priests wore "fine linen" called the "holy garments" (Lev. 6: 10; 16: 4, 32; Ezek. 44: 17, 18) in the national Jerusalem.

Isa. 61: 10. "He **hath** clothed me with garments of salvation; He **hath** covered me with the robe of righteousness."

Rev. 6: 11. "White robes" are **now** possessed by believers.

Rev. 3: 4, 5. Garments not defiled (now)—wear "white robes" now—spiritually, as well as wear them in eternity.

Rev. 4: 4. Those assisting Christ in "the New Jerusalem temple" ("A Word to the Little Flock," pp. 11, 12) are "clothed in white raiment."

Rev. 7: 9, 13. The saved wear white robes in eternity.

To further illustrate this "triple" application of the promises to Israel, in order that we shall be better able to apply the principle that Christ is the centre of each of the three-fold applications of the prophecies of blessing to Israel, additional evidence will be presented in the briefest possible manner:—



# THE TRIPLE APPLICATION OF GOD'S PROMISES TO ISRAEL.

## National Israel.

Literal Kingdom, Visible  
King, City, Temple,  
Sacrifices, Altars, etc.

Holy Nation. Ex. 19:  
5, 6.

Kingdom of Priests. Ex.  
19: 5, 6.

A Peculiar Treasure. Ex.  
19: 5, 6.

God's People. Hos. 1:  
9-10; Rom. 9: 6-8.

A Holy People. Deut.  
7: 6.

A People of Inheritance.  
Deut. 4: 20.

Israel's Shepherd. Jer.  
31: 10.

Israel's Salvation. Isa  
45: 17.

God's Tabernacle Among  
Israel. Lev. 26: 11.

God Walked Among  
Them. Lev. 26: 12.

Christ Married to His  
People. Isa. 54: 5;  
Jer. 3: 14; Hos. 2:  
19; Jer. 6: 2; 31: 32.

Christ Reigned in Jerusa-  
lem. 1 Chron. 29: 3;  
Zech. 8: 3; Ps. 132:  
13; 43: 2; Matt. 5:  
35; Zech. 2: 5, 10,  
11; Joel 3: 21, 27;  
Isa. 2: 2; Micah 4: 2.

Literal Gathering to Jeru-  
salem. In their festi-  
vals, etc.

Literal Zion. Ps. 50: 2;  
2: 6.

Enemies Gather Against  
Israel. Isa. 8: 7, 8;  
36: 1, 2, 37; 54: 15,  
17; Ezek. 38, 39;  
Zech. 12: 3, 9; 14:  
1, 2.

## Spiritual Israel.

Spiritual Kingdom. Luke  
17: 20, 21, margin;  
1 Pet. 2: 5, 9; 1 Cor.  
10: 3, 3; Col. 1: 13;  
AA. 30, 28, 39; GC.  
347, 348; DA. 506;  
Heb. 4: 16; Heb. 8:  
1; Zech. 6: 13; etc.

Holy Nation. 1 Pet. 2:  
9; Zeph. 2: 1; Matt.  
21: 43.

Kingdom of Priests.  
1 Pet. 2: 5, 9 Rev. 1:  
6. Rev. 4: 4; 5: 10.

A Peculiar Treasure.  
1 Pet. 2: 9.

God's People. 1 Pet. 2:  
9.

A Holy People. 1 Pet.  
1: 15, 16.

A People of Inheritance.  
Eph. 1: 18.

Israel's Shepherd. John  
10: 11.

Israel's Salvation. Heb.  
5: 9; 9: 15.

God's Tabernacle Among  
Israel. John 1: 14.

God Walks Among His  
People. 2 Cor. 6:  
16-18.

Christ Married to the  
Church. Ephes. 5:  
23-33; 2 Cor. 11: 2;  
Jas. 4: 4; Rom. 7:  
1-4; Rev. 12 (Christ's  
bride); MH. 356.

Christ reigns in the  
Church. Ephes. 2:  
20-22; 1 Cor. 3: 16;  
2 Cor. 6: 16; John  
14: 16-23. Acts of  
Apostles, pp. 11, 12,  
600.

Spiritual Gathering to  
Jerusalem—the Church.  
Isa. 11: 11, 12; PK.  
375, 376; E.W. 74,  
75; 6T. 133; 7T. 172;  
9T. 51; Isa. 60: 3, 4,  
6, 7, 9; PK. 375; AA.  
595; Rev. 18: 4.

Spiritual Zion—the  
Church. Joel 2: 32;  
Rom. 10: 13; Isa. 28:  
16; 1 Pet. 2: 6-8;  
Isa. 59: 20; Rom. 11:  
26; Ps. 2: 6.

Enemies Gather Against  
the Church. Isa. 54:  
15, 17; Rev. 14: 20,  
etc.

## New World.

Literal, Visible Kingdom.  
Rev. 21, 22, etc.

Holy Nation. Isa. 26: 2;  
51: 4, 7; 66: 22, 23.

Kingdom of Priests. Rev.  
20: 4; 3: 21.

A Special Treasure. Mal.  
3: 17, margin.

God's People. Rev. 21:  
3.

A Holy People. Rev. 20:  
6; 22: 11.

"Eternal Inheritance."  
Heb. 9: 15.

Israel's Shepherd. Rev.  
7: 17.

Israel's Salvation. Rev.  
19: 1.

God's Tabernacle Among  
Israel. Rev. 21: 3;  
Ezek. 37: 26-28.

God With His People.  
Rev. 21: 3.

Christ Married to the  
New Jerusalem. Rev.  
21: 9; 19: 7-9; Matt.  
25: 10; Luke 12: 36.

Christ Will Reign in the  
New Jerusalem. Rev.  
22: 1, 3.

Literal Gathering to the  
New Jerusalem. Rev.  
20: 8, 9; 21: 24-27;  
22: 14; Isa. 66: 22,  
23.

Eternal Zion. Rev. 14:  
1; Ps. 2: 6.

Enemies Gather Against  
the Saved Within the  
New Jerusalem. Rev.  
20: 8, 9.

The points of the compass (whether in their **literal** sense, as when they pertained to national Israel, or when they form the **basis** of an **imagery** used in their spiritual application to the church, or when literally applied to the new world) referred to in **the prophecies of Israel**—their triumphs and the destruction of their enemies—radiate as from Christ—the centre—reigning in the midst of His people:—

## National Israel.

Zech. 8: 3; 2: 5, 10, 11;  
12: 3, 9; Joel 3: 2,  
9-14, 17, 21; Ezek.  
38: 12, 5, 6; 39: 7;  
43: 7; Jer. 3: 17; Isa.  
54: 15, 17; Ps. 83:  
2-5, etc. See texts  
given in the outline on  
"The Kings of the  
East."

## Spiritual Israel—the Church.

Ezek. 39: 7; 38: 12, 5,  
6; Joel 3: 2, 9-14, 17,  
21; Jer. 3: 17; Isa.  
54: 15, 17; 6T. 23;  
Zech. 14: 2, 12; GC.  
657; EW. 289, 290;  
Rev. 14: 20; Matt.  
18: 20; Rev. 19: 19;  
17: 13, 14; 16: 14,  
etc.; 1 Cor. 3: 16, 17;  
6: 19; 2 Cor. 6: 16;  
Ephes. 2: 21, etc.

## New World.

Rev. 21: 2, 3; 20: 8, 9;  
21: 13, 22-27; 22:  
1-3, 14; Ezek. 37:  
26-28, etc.

The abundant use of this "triple" application of the Scriptures could be much further demonstrated, for this principle is manifested throughout the Old Testament promises and prophecies **pertaining to Israel**. It is the failure to grasp this "triple" view which has occasioned some misunderstanding of the predictions concerning the closing scenes leading up to, and, including, Armageddon.

What used to be **literal** in relation to national Israel, centred in old Jerusalem, is also applied in a **spiritual** sense in its "double" application, in relation to the Messiah's spiritual kingdom centred in spiritual Jerusalem, the church. The "triple" application is to be found in relation to the New Jerusalem, the capital of the Messiah's eternal kingdom. This triple view of the prophecies concerning the blessings and triumphs of Israel causes all **things** (the **literal** things of the **past**, the **spiritual** things of the **present**, and the **literal** things of the **future**) to fall automatically into their proper places, and simplifies the understanding of the Scriptures. The present period is what the Spirit of Prophecy terms "the dispensation of the Spirit," and it is the spiritual application of the prophecies concerning **Israel** which **now** operates.

A close study of the facts presented above will reveal that Christ is the centre in each one of the three applications of the Old Testament prophecies concerning Israel. In the time of literal Israel, north, south, east, and west mentioned in matters pertaining to Israel were centred in Jerusalem, with Christ reigning within that metropolis. From the rejection of Jerusalem, and the Jewish nation, as God's centre, no writer of the prophecies of the New Testament refers to Jerusalem as the centre from whence the directions of the prophecies concerning Israel are to be reckoned. North, South, East, and West referred to in the prophecies concerning Israel, such as: Isa. 11: 11, 12; Isa. 60; Ezek. 38: 5, 6, 15; 39: 2; 43: 1-4 (Rev. 18: 1); 47: 1-8; Joel 3: 2, 9-17, 21; Zech. 14: 2, 3, 8, etc., are reckoned in the sense of **an imagery in relation to the church**, and certainly not to the old, literal, and rejected centre of national Israel.

The enemies of national Israel in their attacks upon that nation; and the gathering of people from the four quarters, involved the **literal** points of the compass as they radiated from the land of Israel, but when these prophecies which, had they been faithful, could have been **literally** fulfilled in the experiences of **national** Israel, are applied (as these Israel-prophecies are applied) in connection with the church (the church being spiritual Israel, upon the spiritual mountains of Israel) the points of the compass which radiate therefrom in the imagery of the Israel-prophecies **cannot**, in the very nature of things, refer to **literal** directions of the compass **as reckoned actually from Jerusalem**. That is, the points of the compass referred to in the conditional prophecies of Israel, **which the church inherits** as her God-given heritage, can have **no literal** significance when applied to the church in all the world. The only purpose such geographical directions could serve would be as the basis of an **imagery**—as if the church were located in Palestine, and the gathering of her enemies, or the gathering of the members of the church depicted in such passages as Isa. 11: 11, 12, etc., actually came from the directions mentioned. Certain local matters in those conditional prophecies drop from view when applied in



connection with the world-wide application of those predictions in connection with the church. In an imagery, as in a parable, a meaning is not to be sought for in every detail, for the main purpose is to provide a general word **picture**.

Many illustrations could be given, but with the passing notice of only one, we must turn from this aspect of prophetic study.

In Ezek. 38, 39 is pictured an assault by a vast, combined army, against Israel. Through the intervention of God the evil forces seeking the destruction of Israel are themselves destroyed. To complete this **picture** of absolute **victory for Israel** they are pictured as **gathering** their dead enemies and **burying** them. See Ezek. 39: 11-15. This feature of the portrayal of the outcome of Armageddon is not to be taken literally—for that (apart from many other considerations) would contradict Jer. 25: 23, where we are informed that those slain in the slaughter of Armageddon, **shall not be lamented, neither gathered, nor buried**, they shall be dung upon the ground."

Ezek. 38, 39 is an imagery and, as such, the local setting, **with the points of the compass**, are not to be interpreted **literally**, but only as parts of a word picture. Jer. 25: 33 is a straight-out statement **without an imagery**—hence while the two prophets speak of the same thing and appear to contradict each other, the apparent discrepancy is due to the fact that Ezekiel's vision is in the form of an imagery.

Space forbids further consideration of many other factors which could be presented in making clearer this phase of prophetic exegesis.

There is a distinction between wars of the nations in the general conditions of the world, Matt. 24: 6-8; Rev. 11: 18, and the "war" against God and His church, Dan. 7: 21; Rev. 12: 7, 17; 13: 7. The Bible mentions two kinds of famines—for food, and for the Word of God. The bread of life is not the material bread; neither is the water of life material water. The prophetic time, which, in Rev. 10: 6, is declared to be no longer, is not the same as the time of the clock, nor yet the time periods of Dan. 7: 25; 12: 7, or the days of Rev. 12: 6, 14. The sixth hour of John 19: 14 was ordinary Roman time in contradistinction to the third hour of the Hebrew reckoning mentioned in Mark 15: 25. John 11: 9 is based upon Roman time. Worldly poets, as well as divinely inspired prophets, are mentioned in the Scriptures, Titus 1: 12; Acts 17: 28.

Just as profane and worldly, as well as the sacred, things are mentioned in the Scriptures, so it is with the points of the compass. Ordinary directions as seen by an inhabitant of the world are mentioned the same as Roman time, or material wars, but these are not to guide us when it comes to the consideration of the directions of north, south, east or west in the Israel—prophecies which **concern the church**. In the predictions concerning Israel given above all the points of the compass are referred to, but, of course, as Israel (the church) is not in Palestine those directions of the compass cannot be reckoned from the **literal** land of Israel, as they were when the **literal nation** of Israel occupied the field of action as God's people. That is, the enemies of Israel gathering from the four quarters of the earth; or of the people of God being gathered from north, south, east, and west to worship God in Jerusalem, cannot **now** refer to a **literal** gathering to **literal** Jerusalem from the actual points of the compass. If the church were located in Palestine, or Jerusalem, only then could such be true. As the church is **pictured** as being in the place of national Israel, then her enemies are **pictured** as if coming from the four quarters of the earth. The gathering of the remnant from the four quarters of the earth predicted in Isa. 11: 11, 12; Isa. 60, etc., is applied in the Spirit of Prophecy to the gathering out of the remnant from the world to join in with spiritual Israel. But it is perfectly obvious that the points of the compass here referred to cannot be **literally** applied in connection with the church. How could the east of Ezek. 47 be the **literal** east in the **ordinary** sense, when we know from the Spirit of Prophecy that our work is thereby depicted? Rev. 7: 1-3 is similarly to be understood, except that because the truth comes **from heaven**, and as the earth rotates from east to west persons or things **which come to earth** from heaven **appear** to those dwelling upon the earth (and the **law of appearance** is one of the recognized Bible features—hence the Bible speaks of the sun **rising and setting**, when, of course, it is only the rotation of the world upon its axis which gives the sun, moon, and stars their **apparent** diurnal motion across the heavens) **as if** coming from what is ordinarily known as the east. Thus the **heavenly** origin in this instance, as well as in Rev. 16: 12, coincides with what is known as the east in ordinary reckoning. Of course, so far as we know there is no north, south, east, or west outside

of this planet. The east mentioned in Rev. 7: 1-3; 16: 12 if applied literally would only refer to that direction as it would be viewed from the earth, and **certainly not apart from the earth**.

Such texts as Dan. 11: 44 involve the consideration of different types of prophecy—whether type and **antitype**; a **continuous** type (as Dan. 11 is); do the directions **pertain** to Israel? The north and east are mentioned in Dan. 11: 44 not in reference to spiritual Israel, the church, but to the **nations**, and hence those directions are not in the same category as those which pertain to the church, which, as we have seen, are centred in Christ within the church, and cannot be applied **literally**.

There is one point which, for the student of the Bible, I should explain a little more in detail, and that is concerning the "east" of Rev. 7: 2; 16: 12. In my outline on "The Kings of the East," I did not wish to confuse the minds of the ordinary folk for whom that outline was primarily written. Just briefly touching on the issues involved reference was made to Christ coming in the eastern skies. It is perfectly true that Christ will come **from heaven**, and **because of that He will appear to come from the east**, due to the rotation of the earth upon its axis. If Christ actually came in a downward direction, that is, directly from above the earth, yet, due to the rotundity of the earth, and its **rotation** upon its axis, from west to east, **to the inhabitants of the earth** He will first appear over the eastern horizon. While all this is quite true, yet all that is actually required to fulfil the anti-type is that a mighty Conqueror, accompanied by other kings lower in rank, and under His command, should come to destroy Babylon.

Cyrus, and other kings, came from the east to destroy **literal** Babylon. John's application of this great historic feature, of course, is that of an **imagery** (of type and anti-type), **as he does with so many other Old Testament experiences referred to in the Revelation**. In the imagery he employs, the **literal east** is no more a necessity than **literal Babylon**, or the **literal Euphrates**, which are also in the **picture**. In the **imagery** all that is required is, that **as** the Kings of Medo-Persia came from the east to destroy **literal** Babylon, so a mighty Conqueror, leading others, will come to destroy spiritual Babylon. **Literal** directions of the compass are not literally applied in an **imagery**, as we have shown in regard to the predictions involving spiritual Israel—her blessings, and her triumphs over her enemies. Babylon, of course, is the great enemy of Israel—this fact is prominently brought to view in the Apocalypse. Rev. 18: 2, 4, etc.

The vision mentioned in Ezek. 47 in which the east is pictured, is, as we have shown, applied by the Spirit of Prophecy in connection with the third angel's message, consequently, this east has no **literal** significance—it is only employed as a part of the imagery in which the blessing of God flowing out of the church goes to bless a needy world. The east brought to view in Ezek. 43: 1-5 can be applied in the same **spiritual** sense for, in Rev. 18: 1, we have the **spiritual** application of Ezek. 43: 2, "the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east . . . the **earth shined with His glory**." The Revelator pointing to the close of the work of spiritual Israel says, "I saw another angel come **down from heaven**, having great power; and the **earth was lightened with his glory**." Because, in the imagery of Ezek. 43 and 47, our work is **depicted** with the blessing of God coming **as from the east**, so the Revelator in Rev. 7: 1-3 describes the rise of the third angel's message **as coming from the east**. It is an **imagery**, and does not refer primarily to the **literal** east.

In describing the events associated with the coming of Christ in the east the Spirit of Prophecy refers to "**the voice of God like many waters**" (mentioned in Ezek. 43: 2). EW. 285. "Soon our eyes were drawn to the **east** for a small black **cloud** had appeared . . . which we knew was **the sign of the Son of man**." "Soon appeared the great white **cloud**, upon which sat the Son of man. When it first appeared in the distance, this cloud looked very small. The angel said that it was **the sign of the Son of man**." EW. 15, 286; G.C. 640.

Thus Ezek. 43: 2, which states that "the **glory** of the God of Israel came by the way of the **east**: and **His voice like many waters**," is referred to by the Spirit of Prophecy in describing Christ's second advent which God's servant depicts first as coming from "the east." Ezek. 43: 2 is also quoted in Rev. 1: 15 in the description of Christ in His present work as the great High Priest ministering between God and Israel. It would take us too far afield to commence to prove that the dispensation of the Spiritual is completed by the second coming of Christ. Suffice to say that, as in God's plan the sacrificial system ceased with the death of Christ, so the law of Scriptural imagery ceases at the



second coming of Christ. The 1,000 years of Rev. 20 are, on this principle, no longer estimated according to the plan of a day-for-a year. That is, they are not 360,000 years according to the law of symbols, but literal years.

The reader's attention is directed back to the triple application of the prophecies concerning Israel, as set forth previously. That which was literal (or could have been) in the experience of **national** Israel, is now applied spiritually in connection with the **church**, and that which is now spiritually applied in connection with the church will have its literal application in the new world, and will be experienced by the church after the second advent. That is, regarding the matters pertaining to Israel, the second advent of Christ is the dividing line between the spiritual, and the literal in the experience of the church. Many instances could be quoted to show that things which are spiritually applied in connection with the church before the second advent are literally applied at, or after, the Saviour's second coming. A few samples will be given:—

Heavenly things are now seen by the eye of faith—through the imagery found in God's Word. 1 Cor. 2: 9, 10. "God **hath** revealed them unto us by His Spirit." These heavenly things the saints now behold in **spiritual** vision, before **literally** beholding them in the eternal kingdom.

The church is now a temple "Whose Builder and Maker is God." This verse (Heb. 11: 10) is referred to in 9T. 180, and applied to the church. The church is the spiritual New Jerusalem in which God now dwells, as He will dwell eternally in the visible, literal New Jerusalem, the metropolis of the new world. See also Heb. 12: 22, 23; Ephes. 2: 21, 22; John 14: 23. The New Jerusalem "hath foundations." Heb. 11: 10; Rev. 21: 14, 19, 20—so has the church. 1 Cor. 3: 11; Ephes. 2: 20, etc. The spiritual application of the New Jerusalem to the church could be more fully demonstrated; but once again space forbids the inclusion of the many facts which could be presented.

There is a **spiritual** temple on the earth, and a **visible, literal** temple in heaven. In addition to the texts given earlier, see also Rev. 11: 1, 2; GC. 266; TM. 17; AA. 595; PK. 36. While the work of measuring, or the judgment, is being done in the literal temple in heaven, the judgment message is being sounded on the earth. This message calls upon all to come up to the measurement required by the judgment which is convening in the literal temple above. The spiritual temple—the spiritual Jerusalem—continues until it merges into the literal things of the eternal kingdom—but the same pictures are applicable to both. The things of Israel have their spiritual application on the earth until the second advent.

The Holy City is said to be measured—the same is applied to the church. See Rev. 21: 15; 11: 1, 2; Ezek. 48: 16, 20; Rev. 21: 16; Ezek. 48: 31; Rev. 21: 12, 13; Ezek. 48: 30-34 and Rev. 21: 12-17. What is said of the literal city in heaven is likewise said of the church, the spiritual dwelling place of God, on earth.

"Behold, I make all things new," promises God (Rev. 21: 5) concerning the eternal kingdom. "Behold, all things are become new," declared Paul of those "in Christ." The spiritual application in connection with the church comes before the literal application to the eternal kingdom.

The New Jerusalem is declared to be "**the bride**, the Lamb's wife." Rev. 21: 9. In M.H. 356 we read: "He Himself is the Bridegroom; **the bride is the church**." See also GC. 381, and notice the texts of Scripture quoted therein; also Ephes. 5: 23-33; Rom. 7: 1-14, etc. The comment of the Spirit of Prophecy on Rev. 22: 17, which reads, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come," is, "The church is to say, Come." 9T. 43. The verses in the Revelation, prior to this statement, refer to the New Jerusalem as "the bride." Thus we see that the Spirit of Prophecy teaches that **the church is the bride of Christ**. But it teaches just as plainly that the **New Jerusalem is Christ's bride**. See GC. 426. Christ is now married to His church—His "marriage" to His kingdom takes place just before He returns to the earth. Matt. 25: 1-13; Luke 12: 36. Christ's marriage to the spiritual bride (His church) precedes His marriage to His kingdom, with its literal things.

His **spiritual** glory in the church precedes the manifestation to the church of His **literal** glory. Col. 1: 26, 27; Luke 17: 20, 21; 2 Thess. 2: 14; 1 Pet. 4: 14; Isa. 40: 1-5 (see PK. where Isa. 40: 1-5 is now spiritually applied); Hag. 2: 3, 7-9; 1 Pet. 1: 10-12; John 17: 22; 1: 14; 12: 41, 45; Ex. 33: 18: 18-22; 34: 5, 6; Isa. 42: 8; 48: 11; Matt. 25: 31; John 17: 24, etc.

Spiritual rejuvenation goes before the literal. Texts describing the new earth have first a spiritual application in the experience of the church. See 6T. 24, 308, where we find a reference to Isa. 35: 1, 2, which is now spiritually applied; also 6T. 308, where Isa. 55: 13 (another new earth text) is now spiritually applied.

The spiritual birth must precede the regeneration of the physical world. John 3: 3-7; Titus 3: 5; Matt. 19: 28.

Spiritual salvation, or redemption, occurs before physical redemption. Matt. 1: 21; John 1: 12; 3: 36; 1 John 5: 11, 12; Rom. 14: 17; Acts 13: 22, 23; 5: 30, 31; Luke 2: 30-32; Rom. 8: 23; Luke 21: 28.

Spiritual robes of salvation are worn now, eternal robes are to be worn from the time of the second advent. Isa. 61: 10; Rev. 3: 4, 5, 18; 6: 11, and texts given earlier.

The Bible is now the spiritual tree of life—the eternal and literal tree of life will be seen by the saved after the second advent. Prov. 3: 18, 22; 15: 4; Phil. 2: 16; 1 Pet. 1: 23; MH. 66, 122, 173, 199; AA. 478.

We drink of the spiritual water of life before we drink of the water of life which proceeds "out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." John 4: 10, 14; 7: 38, 39; Ezek. 47: 1-12; AA. 13-16; 7T. 24; 9T. 96. Rev. 22: 17 applies to this dispensation. The saved see the "pure river of water of life" after the second advent. Rev. 22: 1, 2.

The church is encompassed by a spiritual wall against the assault of Satan's forces before she is protected by the walls of the New Jerusalem against Satan's attacking forces. Zech. 2: 5; TM. 18; DA. 323, 324; AA. 600; Rev. 20: 8; Isa. 60: 18.

The description of the Messiah's seat of government given in Isa. 54 is spiritually applied to the church, and also is employed to describe the literal New Jerusalem. PK. 724, 725, etc.

The spiritual attack upon, and the surrounding of, Christ's church takes place before the literal attack upon, and the surrounding of, the New Jerusalem. Isa. 54: 15-17; Rev. 14: 20; 20: 8, 9.

God's people now "follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth" before they literally follow Him in His eternal kingdom. Rev. 14: 4; C.O.L. 223.

Spiritual fire precedes literal fire. DA. 107, 108.

The spiritual kingdom of grace precedes the literal kingdom of glory. Col. 1: 12; Heb. 4: 16; Matt. 25: 31, etc.

Joel 3: 14 has now a spiritual application. 6T. 406; 4T. 446. In the final scenes the multitudes who have rejected God will then be in the valley of concision, or destruction.

The spiritual shaking occurs before the literal shaking. The literal shaking of the mountains of the earth at the second advent is mentioned in PP. 340, etc. In IT. 184, Joel 3: 16; Heb. 12: 26; Rev. 16: 17, are referred to. In Hag. 2: 6, 7, 21, 22, mention is made of the physical upheavals at the second advent. Paul, in Heb. 12: 26-28, connects the spiritual and the literal shakings. After quoting Hag. 2: 6 (which reads, "Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven"), he says:—"And this word, yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that may be shaken (margin), as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain." From the fact, that at the second advent everything is to be physically and literally shaken, he writes of a spiritual shaking which will precede this literal shaking. The Spirit of Prophecy gives the spiritual application in IT. 355; 9T. 15, 16, 62, 179-182; EW. 50; 269-273; TM. 11, 12; 6T. 332.

The spiritual wall of Babylon (the false Sabbath) will fall (Jer. 51: 44; Ezek. 13: 10-16, etc., when the beast's power collapses, Rev. 19: 20), as do also the literal walls of the Babylonian cities. Rev. 16: 19; Ezek. 38: 19, 20.

Spiritual fire is to devour spiritual Babylon (Jer. 50: 32; 51: 32, 58; Rev. 17: 16; 18: 6-9, 18; 19: 3). Literal fire at Christ's second advent is also employed in the



destruction of Babylon. Christ comes "in flaming fire taking vengeance" on the people of Babylon. 2 Thess. 1: 7-9; 2: 8. Spiritual Babylon is burned with spiritual fire (Rev. 17: 16; 18: 6-8), but at Christ's coming the whole earth will be ablaze with the fire of His presence, which makes the earth like "a lake of fire." Rev. 19: 20. "Fierce lightnings leap from the heavens, enveloping the earth in a sheet of flame." GC. 638, 641. Ps. 50: 3, 4; 97: 3-5. There is to be a spiritual as well as a literal burning. Dan. 7: 11 can refer to both.

With these examples in mind of the use of the spiritual and the literal application let us once again turn to Rev. 16: 12. The imagery of this verse is based upon the overthrow of literal Babylon at the hand of Cyrus. As we have shown, in such imagery the actual points of the compass are not to be literally applied. In dealing with world-wide things (Babylon and the church) there can be no **actual** north, south, east or west of either—except as it would appear to be from the earth. That is, Rev. 16: 12 is based upon the historical incident of the overthrow of Babylon by Cyrus, and in the imagery, modern Babylon is not literally and geographically located as was old Babylon, and so the prophecy does not call for an earthly conqueror to come from the east of Jerusalem, or Babylon. The literal factors of Babylon, the Euphrates, the kings of Medo-Persia who came from the east, form the imagery. Those things are not to be repeated—literally. And the east is no more to be the **literal east** of Jerusalem, or of Babylon, than the **actual city** of Babylon, or the **literal river** Euphrates. But Christ, in coming down from heaven, is seen by those on a round earth, which rotates from west to east, as if coming over the eastern horizon. Thus the **east** of the **imagery** coincides with the literal east as viewed from the earth. In this way the east of Rev. 16: 12, which, in its primary meaning, is a spiritual east—an imagery—can, in its secondary application, refer to the literal east as viewed by the spiritual Babylonians, or by the people of God on the earth.

As we have shown, Ezek. 43: 2, which states that, "the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east . . . and the earth shined with His glory" is quoted in Rev. 18: 1 in reference to the loud cry of the third angel's message, which is depicted (in harmony with Ezekiel's vision) in Rev. 7: 1-3 as coming from the east. This is the **spiritual** application of Ezek. 43: 2. A reference is made in EW. 285 to Ezek. 43: 2 **in connection with the second coming of Christ**. "The voice of God like many waters" mentioned in EW. 285 is a quotation from Ezek. 43: 2, and as in Ezek. 43: 2 "the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east," so the servant of God saw Christ's cloud of glory coming from the east. EW. 15, 286; GC. 640. Thus Ezek. 43: 2 has its spiritual application in the proclamation of the third angel's message—the **spiritual glory** which comes "the way of the east." This also is depicted in Rev. 7: 1-3, where the sealing message is represented as coming from the east. The literal application of Ezek. 43: 2 will take place when Christ's literal glory will be seen in the eastern skies.

## WHAT OCCURS WHEN THE KING OF THE NORTH COMES TO HIS END?

There are other features involved in the study of the subject of "Armageddon." No doubt the reader will be provoked to enquire further concerning some features which have not been dealt with in this outline. The question may be asked—Does not Dan. 12: 1 teach that a mighty conflict of the nations—Armageddon—will transpire in Palestine when the king of the north comes to his end? Is not Armageddon—the clash of nations at Megiddo—to result from the nations scrambling for Turkish territory? Only a brief mention can be made to this prophecy.

One feature, however, which must be noted is that there are three events predicted to transpire ~~when the king of the north comes to his end~~: (1) Michael, or Christ commences His reign; (2) There is to be the greatest time of trouble since there was a nation; (3) And at that time God's people will be delivered. See Dan. 12: 1.

There is a real danger that the main purpose of the prophecy becomes obscured by human imagination. For instance, too many see in the termination of this prophecy the signal for a mighty rush of **all** the nations of the world to Palestine to engage in

"Armageddon." It used to be declared that Christian nations would drive Turkey from Jerusalem, and this would precipitate a great conflict in Palestine, for all the nations desired to share in her territory.

Actually, the Bible says nothing about the nations rushing to take Turkish territory, whatever may or may not be done in this regard in the future.

When the Turks were driven out of Jerusalem, Palestine and Mesopotamia, there was not a gathering of the nations to engage in "Armageddon," instead, sometime afterwards, the first world war ceased. Somehow the ending of the first world war

Both Dan. 11: 45 and Rev. 16: 12 refer to the same conflict.  
\* This error I corrected in "The King of the North at Jerusalem" and subsequent publications.—L. F. Were.

anything specifically to occur in Palestine after the ending of the king of the north. The events mentioned in Dan. 12: 1 are the commencement of Christ's reign, the time of trouble, and the deliverance of God's people. **These are world-wide events.** The main purpose of the prophecy is to point out that the ending of the king of the north is the last political sign before the closing of Christ's mediatorial ministry in the heavenly temple, and the events which follow because He no longer intercedes on behalf of humanity.

Both Dan. 11: 45 and Rev. 16: 12 refer to the same conflict.  
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## SATAN'S FUTURISM CENTRED IN PALESTINE — OPPOSES THE THIRD ANGEL'S MESSAGE, WHICH THROWS LIGHT UPON PALESTINIAN PROPHECIES.

The teaching of a literal conflict in Palestine (involving Jerusalem and the Jews), in which nations to the north, and others to the east, or from any direction would come to Palestine, **antedated the giving of the light from the sanctuary**, which enabled us to get a correct perspective of all last-day predictions. The incorrect system of interpreting the unfulfilled Israel-predictions was based upon the return of the Jews to Palestine; the trouble among nations; the coming of Christ to reign in Jerusalem, and the 1,000 years of blessedness to follow. The old expositors' wrong conception of future events was the factor which caused them to thus interpret last-day prophecies. Our entirely different conception of future events associated with the close of probation and the desolation of the earth during the millennium has nothing in common with the popular, but erroneous teachings. Yet despite the transparent difference of approach to the understanding of last-day events, the interpretations concerning a conflict of nations in Palestine, involving nations from the north (Ezek. 38-39), and the east (Rev. 16: 12; Joel 3: 9-16, etc.) and in fact, from all points of the compass (as in the belief based upon Ezek. 38-39; Rev. 16: 14-16, etc.) agree with the old teachings which are based upon a misconception of future events relating to the Jews and Palestine, and the reign of Christ in Jerusalem, during the millennium. With the added light of the sanctuary truth concerning Israel, the close of probation, the end of the world, and the desolation of the earth during the millennium, etc., we should alter our approach to the thought of a Palestinian conflict.

With the light shining from the sanctuary, we have cast aside all the last-day errors which were established upon wrong interpretations of the Israel predictions, but still adhere to the Palestinian conflict which has been (and still is) the necessary corollary of the whole erroneous scheme of interpretation.

Before the light of the Third Angel's Message came, the prophecies concerning Israel and Palestine were more easily misapplied, for it is the Third Angel's Message with light on the sanctuary question that explains the problems of last-day interpretation. Jerusalem and its temple, and the Great High Priest are above. Jerusalem, the Jews, and the promised land were finished with in the purpose of God, at the latest in A.D. 34. The unfulfilled Israel prophecies then became the property of the church—the True Israel.

The sanctuary truths reveal that Israel is now a spiritual Israel—a world-wide Israel—with its glorified Lord reigning as King on the throne of Grace in the great Temple above. The High Priest of spiritual Israel will complete His heavenly ministry as the Jewish High Priest completed his yearly ministry in the solemn work on the day of atonement. The close of probation and the terrible judgments of God to fall after Christ's heavenly work is completed, and the events to follow were impossible of appreciation until the light shone from the sanctuary following 1844. The seven last plagues; the desolation of the earth during the millennium; the establishment of the kingdom of Glory after 1,000 years, and the complete fulfilment of all Israel-predictions seen in Christ's eternal reign centred in the New Jerusalem, with the inclusion of all pure people of all nations as citizens of the Commonwealth of Israel, were made clear by the light of the great three-fold message of Rev. 14. Our danger is that in considering the theme of Armageddon we are influenced by the interpretation of the Israel predictions which were conceived before the light of the Third Angel's Message came. Those interpretations were definitely connected up with the return of the Jews to Palestine, followed by trouble among the nations, the coming of Christ as the King of the Jews, His establishment as their King, and the consequent blessing to mankind during the millennium. Their whole scheme of interpretation was based upon such a conception. But we know differently, and should re-adjust our interpretation of Israel (or Palestinian) prophecies to be in harmony with the light shining from the sanctuary revealed by the Third Angel's Message.

Many quotations could be given which would show that the belief of the Palestinian conflict involving nations from all quarters of the earth antedated the rise of our message, and that in no longer accepting such falsely founded beliefs we are not

removing one pin from the message itself. To the contrary, the proper examination of the question will reveal that the teaching of a literal Palestinian conflict was established upon a totally wrong conception of the prophecies, and, that consequently our dispensing with the false teachings of last-day events associated with that Palestinian conflict makes it necessary to dispense with the Palestinian conflict which was a part of that false system of interpretation—the falsity of which is revealed by the Third Angel's Message.

The interpretation of last-day predictions must be adjusted according to the added truths which were hidden from those living before 1844, whose interpretations were worked out with Palestine as the centre of the coming millennial glories. We must jettison that Palestinian conception of last-day prophecies, as we have dispensed with the other erroneous teachings, which were based upon that Palestinian conception.

By the light from the sanctuary above, the literal Israel in the land of promise with the sanctuary in the midst, is shown to have been a type of spiritual Israel in the Messiah's spiritual kingdom with Christ reigning in their midst.

**The interpretation associated with the literal conflict of nations at Megiddo were all well established views in the ranks of old expositors long before our pioneers were born.** Our spiritual progenitors simply accepted these ideas from earliest writers.

The old historical school of interpreters, though right in their opposition to the Papacy, and in their interpretation of the prophecies concerning the antichrist, were, nevertheless, wrong in their understanding of the prophecies concerning **Israel and the land of Israel**. It was their misunderstanding of these predictions which kept them from understanding the Third Angel's Message—which is based upon those very prophecies. While men were blind to the ultimate meaning of the prophecies upon which the Reformers took their stand, Satan, that master of the prophetic word, saw what God had for the future to bring to light. Satan, therefore, devised a system of prophetic interpretation which concerns **literal events to occur in Palestine**. This system—Futurism—effectually blinds the eyes of millions to the truths of the Third Angel's Message.

The Reformers who preached against the Papal antichrist directed the minds of men to the prophecies which foretold the work of antichrist. Rome's false mediatorial system, with earthly temples, sacrifices, sanctuaries, and priests, turned people's minds away from "the true tabernacle," and the true mediatorial work centred in Christ, to **literal**, earthly counterfeits. The full understanding of the prophecies which outlined the work of the antichrist's false system of mediation, also foretold the rise of the Third Angel's Message, which would bring to light the mighty principles involved in the true sanctuary services. Satan bestirred himself to prepare to prevent people from receiving the final message which God would send to the earth. By his subtle machinations he wove around the very prophecies which the Reformers used to uncover the Papal antichrist, a system of interpretation, which **centred back in literal Jerusalem, in the land of Palestine**. The return of the Jews to Palestine, and the future rehabilitation of Jerusalem as the centre of Jewish national existence, graced with the presence of Christ as King, were themes misunderstood by the old historical school of Protestants. Consequently Satan's system—Futurism—agreed with the Historicists' fundamental belief that all the prophecies, somehow, pointed to the return of the Jews to their land, and to the future glories of Jerusalem during the millennium. That conception had been the basis of their teachings, even when opposing the antichrist. In fact, they used this thought to direct attention to the time when the **western** apostasy of Rome, and the **eastern** apostasy of Mohammedanism, would be overthrown in a mighty battle in Palestine—Armageddon—followed by the millennial reign of Christ in Jerusalem. That is also the basic principle of Futurism.

The literal conflict at Megiddo is a part of that error believed in by the historical school, and also by the Futurists. **The Third Angel's Message turns us away from Palestine in our interpretation of the prophecies involving Israel and the land of Israel.**

The Protestant Reformers were quick to discern that the system of Futurism, which **centred in Jerusalem**, was Satan's device to turn the minds of men away from their participation in the fulfilment of prophecies which were being fulfilled before their eyes, wherever the Papal power extended. Some day the people of the Lord will see that the Palestinian-conflict-of-the-nations teaching is a part of the same plot to turn



people's minds from the real fulfilment which will be in all the world, and in which all will be involved. The Reformers tried to make it plain that the predictions regarding antichrist did not have reference to future events in Palestine, in which their auditors would have no part, but to events right at hand in which they were to be active participants on God's side or on Satan's. We should, similarly, make it clear that Armageddon does not envisage a conflict in far-away Palestine, where the hearers of our sermons will have no part, but to events right at hand in all the world in which they personally will either be on God's side or on Satan's.

The Reformers were clear on the world-wide nature of the antichrist predictions, but somehow associated Palestine in the final acts of those prophecies. The literal conflict at Megiddo teaching by some of us does exactly the same thing. Futurism takes all prophecies concerning the antichrist, and Israel, and applies them to Palestine. And logic demands that these prophecies either be interpreted wholly with a Palestinian-Jewish conception, or a world-wide spiritual-Israel, spiritual-Jerusalem, spiritual-land-of-Israel, interpretation. Like oil and water they will not mix. Confusion results when they are interpreted in relation to Palestine. The Third Angel's Message shows that only a spiritual, universal application can be made of these Israel prophecies.

The answer to the false teachings of both Futurism and Historicism is found in the Third Angel's Message, for it is those very things which both futurists and historicists refer to Palestine that the Third Angel's Message applies to the church in all the world.

I have a pile of books in my library dealing with the futuristic and historical views. Their agreement upon the literal Israel in the land of Palestine associated with the downfall of antichrist at Armageddon is remarkable, especially when one considers that they have arrived at that conclusion from entirely different systems of interpretation. The reason why there is such a blending is due to the illogical conclusion of the prophecies by the historicists. In interpreting prophecies concerning the past they deal with the predictions as pertaining to the church—when they come to deal with the future they then deal with the predictions as treating upon the Jews. They thus cross over from the spiritual Israel to the literal Israel. Futurism is more consistent in the application of the whole of these predictions as referring to the antichrist and the Jews in Palestine. The truth, of course, being that the prophecies concerning Israel are all the property of the church. This is the light which the Third Angel's Message brings.

Both systems of interpretation agree with the Catholics in looking to Jerusalem for the future struggle between the remnant of Israel and the antichrist. Only those who accept the Third Angel's Message can possibly escape the delusions in the world in this regard. Yet the Scriptures make it most clear that futuristic Protestants and Catholics will fulfil the very predictions which forecast the final conflict between God and Satan over the sign of Israel—the Sabbath. As the Jews looked into the future for the fulfilment of the prophecies, and yet actually fulfilled them themselves, so by looking to Palestine for Armageddon to be fought there millions of both futurists and historicists will participate in the world-wide Armageddon in fulfilment of the very prophecies to which they give a Palestinian meaning.

The endeavour on the part of the devil to turn people's minds from the Third Angel's Message, is clearly shown from comments in Schofield's Bible. Every part of the Scripture which is vital to the understanding of the Third Angel's Message, and the coming struggle of the remnant church over the Sabbath, is interpreted to mean the struggle of the remnant of the Jews and Antichrist in Palestine in association with Armageddon, which, they say, is to be fought there.

The great message of Rev. 14: 6-12 can only be understood in the light given concerning spiritual Israel as set forth in the experiences of national Israel. It involves the question of the day of judgment prefigured in the old Jewish sanctuary services. Just as it is impossible to understand the message of Rev. 14: 6-12 concerning the judgment without going back to the history of typical Israel, so it is just as impossible to understand about the coming Armageddon without also going back to the history of typical Israel.

It is the truths of the old sanctuary services which at one time were limited to Jerusalem in Palestine which form the solid foundations of our message. The principle that this fact establishes has not always been seen in relation to Armageddon, and that

principle is, that all the matters of literal Israel which were limited to Palestine are now applied in a spiritual sense in all the world. Consequently to take Megiddo, which is mentioned in the Old Testament as a place where the God of Israel brought destruction to the evil forces Satan was employing to destroy Israel, and give it a second literal, limited meaning, is to take just that one factor from among all the other Israel factors which the message shows must be applied in a world-wide sense, and apply it differently from all the rest. This is crossing over from the spiritual and universal application of the factors which used to be limited to Palestine, and in one instance alone of adopting the system of futurism, which limits the things of Israel to Palestine.

By observing the errors of both futurists and historicists we can see how the errors of both systems of interpretation are centred in Palestine and the Jews in a literal manner, whereas we know, by the light of the Advent Message, that these very features are actually those which portray the work of spiritual Israel in the antitypical land of Israel—the whole world.

In order for this fact to be more readily grasped, as well as to abbreviate as much as possible, the material, visible things which are limited to the literal land of Israel under the old Covenant will be set down on one side, while their spiritual counterparts in the experiences of the church—the spiritual Israel—in the antitypical land of Israel—the whole world—will be set down on the other side. In this way much ground may be covered in a concentrated way. Just the fewest words will be employed:

#### Literat Israel—limited locality, material.

All sacrifices.

Passover Lamb.

Annual feasts—in Palestine.

Passover, unleavened bread.

Fristfruits.

Pentecost.

Blowing of trumpets.

Day of Atonement.

Jubilee.

Whole of sanctuary and its services—in Palestine.

Plan of salvation shown by physical, material things.

Old Covenant.

Nation of Israel.

Land of Israel.

Throne of Israel.

Law on stone.

Visible things.

Jew—material, visible.

Early and latter rains—literal, material rains in Palestine. Zech. 10: 1; Joel 2: 23; Lev. 26: 4; Deut. 11: 14.

Elijah—individual in Palestine—prophet in land of Israel. 1 Kings 17, etc.

Message—commandments of God.

—Against sun worship.

3½ years' drought. James 5: 17.

Translated from Palestine. 2 Kings 2: 11.

#### Spiritual Israel—world-wide, spiritual.

Christ applied to every believer.

Christ our Passover. 1 Cor. 5: 7.

Their spiritual application—world-wide.

Their spiritual application—Gospel—world-wide.

Old Testament words, designations, of material things are employed to tell plan of salvation.

New Covenant.

Church—Israel.

Anywhere in the world.

God's throne—heart—church.

Law in heart.

Spiritual things.

Spiritual Jew. Roms. 2: 28, 29.

Outpouring of Holy Spirit. Acts 2; DA. 827; AA. 55; GC. 611; EW. 133, 134; ST. 21; TM. 506, spiritual world-wide.

Mal. 4: 4, 5. Antitypical Elijah—not an individual, but a world-wide movement.

Message—commandments of God. Rev. 14: 11, 12; 12: 17.

Against Sun-day worship. Rev. 14: 6-12, etc.

3½ prophetic years of drought. Dan. 7: 25; 12: 7; Rev. 12: 6, 14; 13: 5.

Elijah—type of the people of the Third Angel's Message who will be translated "without tasting death." PK. 227; Matt. 16: 28; 17: 1-3; 2 Pet. 1: 16-18.



Contest between Elijah and prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel over true God of Israel. 1 Kings 18.

Slaughter of Prophets of Baal when God demonstrated that He was supreme. 1 Kings 18: 36-40.

Elijah threatened with death. 1 Kings 19: 2.

Elijah flees to the mountains. 1 Kings 19: 3-8.

God feeds Elijah miraculously.

Elijah translated shortly after prophets of Baal slain. 2 Kings 2: 11.

Jezebel—individual in Palestine. Brought customs of sun-worship into Israel.

Babylonian captivity for a period.

God sent three calls for His people to come out of Babylon. Jer. 50: 8; 51: 6, 45. Headed by Ezra, Zerubbabel, Nehemiah.

Return of Jews from Babylonian captivity—see books of Ezra, Nehemiah.

Rebuilt temple in Jerusalem—services again as God had commanded. Ezra, etc. Walls of Jerusalem repaired. Neh. 3. Notice the key word "repaired" used all through Neh. 3.

The prophecy of the cleansing of the sanctuary **began** with the return of the Jews from Babylon to the land of Israel. Dan. 9: 25; Ezra 7.

Back to literal, material land.

Plot to kill Jews, Haman, etc. See the Book of Esther.

Worship of golden image on the plains of Babylon. Dan. 3. Notice the play upon the word "worship."

Plain of Babylon—limited, visible.

Three Hebrews—refuse to worship **image**. Dan. 3.

Babylon—limited—material.

On River Euphrates. Jer. 51: 63; etc. Limited, visible, material.

Conflict between Spiritual Israel and apostate leaders in all the world over true God of Israel. Rev. 14: 6-12.

Slaughter of religious leaders when God reveals His supremacy. False shepherds smitten first. EW. 282; GC. 655, 656.

World-wide threat to destroy the church. Rev. 13, etc.

Remnant people do the same. GC. 625, 626.

"God who cared for Elijah will not pass by one of His self-sacrificing children." GC. 629.

God's people translated shortly after false ministers are slaughtered. GC. 655-657.

Jezebel—the apostate church—brought customs of sun worship into the Christian church. Rev. 2: 20. There is as much authority for expecting the literal return of Elijah and Jezebel as that Megiddo should be repeated in a literal manner.

Church in spiritual Babylon for a time.

The three angels call God's people out of Babylon. Rev. 14: 8; 18: 4.

Christian heeding God's call—coming out of the world-wide city of confusion—Babylon.

God's spiritual temple—His church—restored.

The Third Angel's Message repairs the walls of Jerusalem. Isa. 58: 12-14; 1 Cor. 1: 7, 8.

The prophecy of the cleansing of the sanctuary **ends** with, or brings us to the message which calls God's people out of spiritual Babylon.

Out of Babylon to world-wide, spiritual kingdom of Christ.

Plot to destroy spiritual Jews in all the world. Rev. 12: 17; 13: 14-17; PK. 605; 5T. 450, 451.

Image on plain of spiritual Babylon, invisible, spiritual image, world-wide. Rev. 13, etc. Notice the play upon "worship"; scene borrowed from Dan. 3.

Plain of spiritual Babylon, world-wide, spiritual.

People of Third Angel's Message refuse to worship spiritual **image** to the beast. Rev. 14: 6-12, etc.

Babylon—world-wide, spiritual.

On spiritual River Euphrates. Rev. 17: 1, 15; 18: 21. Picture borrowed from Jer. 51: 63, where stone thrown into Euphrates. World-wide, spiritual.

Jacob's time of trouble—brother coming to slay him—his wrestling by brook Jabbok. Gen. 32: 22-30. Glorious deliverance. Jer. 30: 5-7, 3.

Joshua and Israel fought against the combined forces of the kings (Josh. 10) who were controlled by evil spirits (for all the nations God drove out before Israel were led by demons—see the proof for this in Deut. 18: 9-14; Lev. 18: 21-28, etc.).

Megiddo can only be mentioned in Rev. 16: 16 in a world-wide application **as are all the other factors which have their background in the experiences of literal Israel.**

How utterly inconceivable that out of all the "things" recorded in the Old Testament regarding literal Israel—the literal, visible, material things—**all of which are applied in the New Testament in a world-wide application in connection with spiritual things**—one thing alone—**Megiddo**—should be interpreted in the same literal, visible, natural way as given in the Old Testament times. One has just as much right to expect that all the things which are given in the Old Testament should be repeated in a literal, visible sense in Palestine again, as that Megiddo should again be literally employed in relation to a conflict of nations there **as in the Old Testament**. Even in the Old Testament, Megiddo first comes into view as the **place of a conflict between Israel and her devil-led enemies**; but the teaching of a literal conflict of the nations against each other at Megiddo is **not even as far advanced as the Old Testament** for it makes the conflict, not a struggle between evil forces and Israel (even in Palestine—except as taught by Futurists, etc.) but of **nations against each other**.

The teaching of a literal conflict at Megiddo, as taught by papists, futurists, and the historicists, steps back under the Old Covenant literalities in regard to Palestine, and in so far as that in itself is concerned, helps to bring about confusion on last-day prophecies—and beclouds the understanding in regard to the real conflict. The "natural" interpretation of literal things always blinds the eyes to the actual fulfilment.

The New Testament shows that **everything** of the **Old Covenant** has **now a world-wide application**. The things of Israel in the Old Testament are lifted out of their literal, visible setting and employed in the New Testament in a world-wide application **in relation to the kingdom of Jesus Christ**. And it is the Third Angel's Message which fully brings this to light. All other expositors without the Third Angel's Message have failed to grasp this most important fact. Papists, futurists, the historicists and others who are looking for the fulfilment of such prophecies as Ezek. 38-39; Joel 3; Zech. 14; Rev. 16: 12-16, etc., in Palestine, are deceived not only in so far as events to transpire in Palestine are concerned—but regarding the complete truth of the great Third Angel's Message, for it is their literal Palestinian interpretation of the Israel prophecies that blinds their eyes to the full meaning of God's great message which gives the spiritual world-wide meaning to these predictions.

Those who expect the fulfilment of certain prophecies concerning Israel to be fulfilled in Palestine, simply take those predictions regarding "the great final conflict in which all the world will act a part" (which will involve spiritual Israel and her foes over the mark of the beast) and apply those predictions to occur in the **literal** land of Israel, as if the Old Covenant and the Palestinian aspect of the prophecies still applied.

All the "things" of the Old Covenant—that which was literal and visible in the literal and "natural" land of Israel, in the New Testament is applied in a world-wide, spiritual connection. It is this application of these "things" which clearly shows the Holy Spirit's teaching concerning them.



Papists, futurists, and the historicists are, in regard to the future simply taking these now-universal things of Christ in the New Covenant, and forcing them back again in a literal application into the literal land of Israel.

The Third Angel's Message pulls all the literal things of the Old Covenant out from the literal, typical land and reveals, in an antitypical sense, that the fulfilment of the things of Israel are to be applied in a world-wide spiritual interpretation. In this we not only have the complete truth of God, but the safeguard from all last-day errors concerning "Israel," "the land of Israel," and "Armageddon."

## WILL SATAN BE CROWNED AS CHRIST AT JERUSALEM, AND THUS OCCASION THE GATHERING OF THE NATIONS TO PALESTINE, FOLLOWED BY ARMAGEDDON?

When some students of prophecy look into the question of the gathering of the nations to Megiddo, in Palestine, for "Armageddon," they discover weaknesses in some of the accepted beliefs concerning this great event. Well might they discover these weaknesses, for they are certainly present in some popular views on the subject. To solve their problems presented in popular theories, resort is made to the gathering of the nations being accomplished through the deceptive work of Satan, who, in impersonating Christ, causes the nations to meet at Jerusalem to crown him the king of the world, when subsequent events precipitate Armageddon. Unfortunately this is like placing "new wine into old bottles" or like putting "a piece of new cloth unto an old garment." (Matt. 9: 16, 17.)

The "gathering" mentioned in the prophecy of Rev. 16: 12-16, we have shown has reference to a **uniting** of all those who wilfully continue to violate the law of God. The prophecy does not predict a literal gathering of all the nations of the whole world to Megiddo. All theories regarding the gathering of the nations to Palestine, whether in the course of war operations, or for the crowning of Satan at Jerusalem, are merely human theories which are based upon a misunderstanding of the prophecy.

As we have shown, GC. 561, 562 quotes and interprets Rev. 16: 13, 14. Not the slightest reference is made to a gathering of nations to Palestine for anything—for that is totally foreign to the purpose of the prophecy. But what the Spirit of Prophecy does teach is that "Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to **deceive the world**. . . . Little by little he has prepared the way for his **masterpiece of deception** in the development of **Spiritualism**. He has not yet reached the **full** accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time. Says the prophet (the passage in Rev. 16: 13, 14 is then quoted): "Except those who are kept by the power of God, through faith in His Word, **the whole world** (not those at Jerusalem or Megiddo) will be swept into the ranks of this delusion." The simple teaching of these sentences is that Satan has been endeavouring to deceive the world for a long time, but while meeting with a great deal of success, "the **full** accomplishment of his designs" will not take place until "the last remnant of time, when "the **whole world** (not merely the military portion of it) will be swept into the ranks of this (Spiritualism) delusion." If Rev. 16: 12-16 predicts a gathering of the nations to Palestine to crown Satan, which event would be the forerunner of Armageddon, what a splendid chance it was for the Spirit of Prophecy to have said so when giving a comment directly on the Scripture dealing with the gathering to Armageddon. Instead, the Spirit of Prophecy comment shows that the Scripture involved has to do with the **deception of the whole world**. By the aid of the delusions of **Spiritualism** Satan will succeed in **uniting** the whole world to rebel against God over the Sabbath; for evil spirits will declare that Sunday is the Sabbath of God. Accepting the lying testimony of evil spirits, the world is **united** by Satan in definite high-handed rebellion against God. **That is what the Spirit of Prophecy declares is the interpretation of Rev. 16: 13, 14.**

In commenting again upon Rev. 16: 14, in GC. 623, 624, the messenger of the Lord has written: "Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to **fasten them in deception** (not to lead them over to Palestine), and urge them on to **unite** ("gather" is the word used in Rev. 16: 14) **with Satan** in his last **struggle against the government of heaven**. By these agencies (miracles wrought by evil spirits through Spiritualism to produce supernatural reasons for keeping Sunday), rulers and subjects (not merely the fighting forces, or of those who are supposed to go to Palestine) **will be alike deceived**." That this deception concerns the gigantic issues over the mark of the beast is evident when we compare the above-mentioned statement with the following:

"Satan also works with lying wonders, even bringing down fire from heaven in the sight of men. (Rev. 13: 13.) Thus the inhabitants of the earth will be brought to take their stand." GC. 612.



"The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of Spiritualism . . . they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power. Through the agency of **Spiritualism, miracles** will be wrought . . . **Satan** determines to **unite** (or gather) them in one body, and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of Spiritualism. . . . Then through **Spiritualism working miracles** the Sunday law will be enforced. . . . The miracle-working power manifested **through Spiritualism** will exert its influence against those who choose to obey God rather than men. **Communications from the spirits** will declare that God has sent them to convince the rejectors of Sunday of their error." GC. 588-591. The work of the spirits will be to deceive the world concerning Sunday-keeping—not to gather nations to Palestine.

"Persons will arise pretending to be Christ himself. . . . They will perform wonderful miracles of healing, and will profess to have revelations from Heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures.

"As the crowning act in the great drama of deception, Satan himself will personate Christ. . . . Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. **In different parts of the earth** Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the Revelation. (Rev. 1: 13-15.) The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out upon the air, 'Christ has come! Christ has come!' . . . He heals the diseases of the people, and then, in his assumed character of Christ, he claims to have changed the Sabbath to Sunday, and commands all to hallow the day which he has blessed. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent to them with light and truth. . . . His blessing is pronounced upon the **worshippers of the beast and his image**—the very class upon whom the Bible declares that God's unmingled wrath shall be poured out.

"And, furthermore, Satan is not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ's advent." GC. 623, 624. For further reference in the Spirit of Prophecy to Satan's impersonation of Christ, see also 5T., 698; 8T., 28; F.E., 471, 472; TM., 411; 9T., 16; E.W., 56.

In all these references to this important feature of the future, not once is there a suggestion that the nations will be led by Satan to gather at Jerusalem; or Megiddo, to the coronation of Satan as Christ. The Spirit of Prophecy application of the impersonation of Christ by Satan is always in connection with the **deception** of the people (not the armies of the nations) of the world **over the mark of the beast, which is not a Palestinian matter.**

In the many times the servant of God wrote of this coming, overwhelming deception she had plenty of opportunity of making even the slightest reference to Satan being crowned at Jerusalem—and the supposed precipitation of Armageddon in Palestine by the armies of the nations which have assembled there ostensibly for the coronation ceremony!

We are indebted to her writings for the statement that Satan will appear as Christ (though the same can be reasonably deduced from several Scriptures which speak of the terrible deceptions of the last days (see Matt. 24: 4, 5, 23-27; Mark 13: 22; Luke 21: 11; GC., 623; 1 Tim. 4: 1, 2; 2 Tim. 3: 8; Rev. 13: 13; 16: 13, 14; Isa. 8: 19; GC., 562, etc.), yet that is as far as the Scriptures, or the writings of the Spirit of Prophecy take us. The only reference to localities in this connection made in the Spirit of Prophecy is "Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. **In different parts of the earth** Satan will manifest himself among men as a majestic being of dazzling brightness. GC., 624. If Satan were to be crowned at Jerusalem as the forerunner of Armageddon in Palestine it is more than strange that the Lord did not inform us once in the many instances God's servant wrote concerning Satan's impersonation of Christ. On this subject the only fact which is sustained by revelation from God is that "in **different parts of the earth** Satan will manifest himself." Anything beyond this is mere speculation, and a speculation, too, which is based upon a misunderstanding of the prophecy concerning Armageddon—a merely human effort to explain how the Palestinian Armageddon will come about.

There is no need to speculate as to how any gathering of nations is to be convened at Jerusalem, or Megiddo—for, as we have shown, no such literal gathering is predicted.

In his tract, "Inference v. Sound Doctrine," pp. 8-11, T. Whittle, in speaking of Satan's impersonation of Christ, says: "What human mind can imagine the furore of enthusiasm that will fire the hearts of fallen humanity as they find themselves, in all their sin, in the midst of their iniquities, under the favour, apparently, of the Saviour Himself. . . . What can the nations do in their exuberance and delight, and under the hypnotic influence of the whole unrestricted confederacy of evil, with Satan at their head, masquerading as heavenly beings, what can they do but take their spurious prince of peace, and seat him on the throne of his father David, in old Jerusalem? . . . How is the battle of Armageddon to eventuate? The Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy are both silent here. (And that is an important fact, for that silence is the deathknell of the theory!) We are left to **infer**. (The whole idea is speculation.) It is to take place on . . . the plain of Megiddo ("**Armageddon**" is a **symbolical** place. As we have previously shown, all the places and designations mentioned in the Revelation—including "**Armageddon**"—are symbolically employed.) to the north of Jerusalem. All nations will be there. Joel 3: 2. (which is a misapplication of the verse.) . . . The King of Kings is about to be crowned. A great peace carnival of suitable magnificence and splendour, undreamed of hitherto in magnitude, must celebrate such a unique occasion. The most suitable place to give ample room is, of course, the plain of Armageddon. (There is no such plain!) . . . The ceremony must be of surpassing magnificence. After the coronation ceremony in Jerusalem, the peace carnival inaugurating the millennium will take place. All nations will lavish their wealth in order to make a suitable display. Zech. 14: 14; Micah 4: 13. (These verses are misapplied.) All will come up in their pomp and power. (Isa. 2: 2.)" Then the writer continues to speculate on how Satan will be unmasked before the nations which have assembled and crowned him as Christ, the King—this unveiling precipitates Armageddon!

This theory of Satan's impersonation of Christ and of his being crowned at Jerusalem, which is followed by his unveiling preparatory to Armageddon in Palestine, has several variations, all of which are based upon a misunderstanding of the verses in Rev. 16: 12-16, while looking to Micah 4 and Isa. 2 for support. It is claimed that these Old Testament verses point forward to the time when, Satan being crowned at Jerusalem, he will proclaim **his** word, and then will go forth **what is supposed to be** the word of the Lord! Which statement, unfortunately, is just the reverse of what the Scripture actually states.

One thing stands out clearly, and that is that Micah 4 and Isa. 2 have no relation to any supposed crowning of Satan at Jerusalem. From the principles of Bible interpretation their only possible application is to the work of the Messiah, firstly in this period of the spiritual application of the promises to Israel in connection with the church, and, secondly, to the Messiah's eternal kingdom of glory.

To apply these grand promises of Israel's glory to Satan's supposed crowning at Jerusalem is to wrest the Scriptures, and to wrongly divide the Word of Truth.

In PK., pp. 322, 330, the prophets Micah and Isaiah are coupled together as working with the same object in view. In CT., in the chapter entitled "**The Word and Works of God**," p. 455, the Spirit of Prophecy applies Micah 4: 2 (the parallel verse to Isa. 2: 2) not to the work and words of Satan (!), but in connection with **the actual words of God Himself**. The Word of God is **now** going forth from the church, and it will continue to go forth from the New Jerusalem in the eternal kingdom.

Now as God's messenger has interpreted Micah 4: 2 (and Isa. 2: 2 cannot be applied in any other way, which view is sustained by the texts themselves, as well as by Micah and Isaiah being coupled together in PK., 322, 330) as **belonging to the kingdom of God**, it would not be honest to take Mrs. E. G. White's statements regarding the appearing of Satan as Christ, and by **adding to them** the thought of his being crowned at Jerusalem, use Micah 4 or Isa. 2 to support that view. That would be to make the author contradict herself, or to take something stated by the author,



enlarge it, and then apply Micah 4 and Isa. 2, and make them differ from what the author has interpreted elsewhere in regard to these chapters.

In interpreting the prophecies of Micah 4 and Isa. 2 space demands that we omit much which could be written regarding the type of prophecy, the time element, and the local setting. Both Micah and Isaiah, at about the same time, wrote concerning the same people. Compare Micah 1: 1 and Isa. 1: 1.

Both the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel had departed from God. Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, with the people of the ten tribes, were the first to reap the harvest of apostasy. Because of their continued disobedience God could not protect them. The wicked Assyrians, led on by Satan, came upon them and the threatened Assyrian captivity became a reality. Now, it has always been God's way to send messages of warning in the face of **impending disaster with the promise of wonderful blessings if the call is obeyed.** At such times the vision of the prophets looks beyond the immediate present to the ever-expanding vision to **the fulness of the Messiah's kingdom**, which eventually will be established under the beneficent sceptre of the Prince of Peace. Both Micah and Isaiah wrote (as did all the prophets) of the wonderful **possibilities to Israel if it would only be faithful** to the call of God. Jerusalem would be the centre of the world; from her walls would go forth the glory of God, and many nations would come into the knowledge of God and come up to Jerusalem to worship God, and learn of His principles of love. See GC., p. 19: "Had Israel as a nation preserved her allegiance to heaven, **Jerusalem would have stood forever, the elect of God.**" D. of A., p. 231: "If the leaders in Israel had received Christ, He would have honoured them as **His messengers to carry the Gospel to the world.** To them was given the opportunity of becoming the **heralds of the kingdom and grace of God.**" On pages 576, 577 of this same heaven-sent volume the inspired author says: "If Jerusalem had known what it was her privilege to know, and had heeded the light which heaven had sent her, she might have stood forth in the pride of prosperity, the queen of kingdoms, free in the strength of her God-given power . . . the glorious destiny that might have blessed Jerusalem had she accepted her Redeemer rose before the Son of God. He saw that she might through Him have been healed of her grievous malady, liberated from bondage, and **established as the mighty metropolis of the earth. From her walls the dove of peace would have gone forth to all nations. She would have been the world's diadem of glory.**" (Jer. 4: 1-2.)

Now, as "warning, admonition, promise, **all are for us**, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (Vol. 6, p. 410), then the prophecies of Micah 4 and Isa. 2, wherein are given the wonderful promises to Israel, "are for us." The local setting disappears in the world-wide application in a spiritual sense to the church. **Micah 4 and Isa. 2 would have been literally true** in the experience of national Israel. In the midst of the terrible days of apostasy, when the faithful ones in Israel were sighing for the adominations being done in the midst of God's professing people, with the heavy clouds of the Assyrian invasion looming large on the horizon, God sent a promise of encouragement to His people: "If you will be faithful, repent of your sins, and be obedient, instead of the threatened calamity taking place I will reverse the situation. Instead of nations coming upon you with warlike intentions to destroy you, nations will come to you to learn the ways of righteousness, and will turn their implements of war into peaceful tools; instead of preparing for war they will learn the ways of peace; instead of regarding you as an enemy, as an object of hate and attack, they will come to you as to a friend." Not all nations would have done this, for there would have been those who would still cling to sin and Satan, and these would have come down to Jerusalem to destroy the representatives of God, and of truth, but God would have intervened and destroyed them. Ezek. 38-39 shows what would have happened to the enemies of Israel had Israel lived according to God's plan for them. **Micah 4 and Isa. 2 show the blessing Israel would have been to those nations which would have accepted the God of Israel.** "But in the last days it shall come to pass." (Micah 4: 1; Isa. 2: 1.) This expression in the original means "In the after days," and had reference to some time distant from the days of the prophet, and usually mentioned in connection with the work of the Messiah either for His people, or against their enemies. **Messiah's glory in the Jewish nation would have been exalted above the hills to the mountains, people and nations would**

**have come** in great numbers, like the flowing of a stream, to Jerusalem to worship the God of Israel, they **would have** said, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways, and we will walk in His paths." The law **would have** gone forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," as the statements from GC. and D. of A. quoted above so plainly teach.

Ceasing to fight, many nations would have enjoyed peace with Israel. Nation would not have lifted up sword against nation, neither would they have learned war any more. Every man would have sat "under his vine and under his fig tree," meaning a state of peace (1 Kings 4: 25; Zech. 3: 10), and none would have made them afraid, for they would be trusting in the power of their Infinite Friend. "The Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever." (Micah 4: 7.) That was the glorious privilege of the Jewish nation. **Jerusalem would have stood forever, the elect of God.**" GC., 19. But this promise now belongs to the Israel of God—the church. Of what does the very next verse speak? "And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the **daughter of Zion**, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the **daughter of Jerusalem.**" In connection with the prediction concerning the word of the Lord going forth from Jerusalem, and of the nations learning war no more, and of their coming up to Jerusalem to worship God, is coupled the promise of the restoration of the kingdom to the daughter of Jerusalem. **The fulness of the previous verses will find their literal application when verse 8 is fulfilled.** Fortunately there is no doubt as to the meaning of v. 8: "But **Christ**, by His sacrifice paying the penalty of sin, **would not only redeem man, but recover the dominion which he had forfeited. All that was lost by the first Adam will be restored by the second**, says the prophet." Micah 4: 8 is then quoted. (See p. 67; see also GC., 484, 674.) This extract from "Prophets and Kings," p. 682, is decisive: "The Son of God proposed to come to this earth to pay the penalty of sin, and thus not only to redeem man, but recover the dominion forfeited." **It is of this restoration that Micah prophesied when he said.**" (Micah 4: 8 is then quoted.)

**Micah 4 and Isa. 2 are predictions of the Messiah's kingdom as it could have been through the literal Jewish nation**, with the literal Jerusalem standing "forever, the elect of God." But through the Jewish nation forfeiting this glorious privilege, "Warning, admonition, promise, **all are for us.**" 6T., p. 410. "All the promises of blessing through obedience are **for us.**" Min. Healing, p. 405. Therefore, while the literal fulfilment will take place in the eternal kingdom, **the spiritual fulfilment is in the church of to-day.** Representatives of all nations are coming to the spiritual Jerusalem. **From the church to-day is going forth the word of the Lord, and many people in many nations are learning war no more.** Hatred gives way to love. Instead of living in a state of war against God and His people, men and women in different parts of the world are enjoying the peace that passeth all understanding. Spiritually with the Redeemer they have entered into the kingdom of grace. They have rest of spirit, for they trust in their Infinite Friend. That is the spiritual fulfilment. The **literal fulfilment will be after the thousand years, when the New Jerusalem settles down on the site of the old Jerusalem. Then the word of the Lord shall go forth from Jerusalem**, the mighty metropolis of the glorified new earth; **then all nations will enter the holy city to pay tribute to the God of Israel; then the nations will learn war no more, and only engage in peaceful pursuits; then every man will sit under his own vine and fig tree; then will be restored the first dominion.** In this connection see Rev. 21: 24-26. The complete and literal fulfilment belongs to the literal New Jerusalem, when it descends to the earth after the millenium.

Once more we see the grand principle that these provisional prophecies do not now have a fulfilment in regard to the **literal Jerusalem.** Any scheme of prophetic application which gives these prophecies a fulfilment in relation to the **literal Jerusalem in this dispensation** degrades these predictions from their lofty status to the common level, and causes people to lose sight of the **grand objective of all prophecies—namely, the kingdom of the Messiah first, in His kingdom of grace** (its spiritual work on earth in the church, the spiritual Jerusalem), and, secondly, **the everlasting kingdom of glory** to be set up on the earth at the end of the 1,000 years, when the complete, literal fulfilment will take place, in connection with the New Jerusalem.



In studying Isa. 2 it should be observed that vs. 1-5 hold out the glorious promises to the people of God. V. 5 is an appeal to the nation to "walk in the light of the Lord." After picturing what could be if God's professing people would only render obedience to God, and after his appeal to the nation in v. 5, the prophet then describes the actual conditions of the nation. At v. 6 a break is made in the prophet's description. This is also noticed in the new paragraph indicated. (See also Schofield's Bible.) The Var. Bible has for "therefore"—the first word in v. 6: "But surely." That is, while the previous verses have described the wonderful blessings to come to God's people through walking in the light of God, instead of such conditions prevailing, he declares: "But surely thou hast forsaken Thy people, the house of Jacob, because," etc.

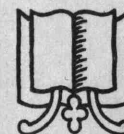
The blessings promised to God's professing people (vs. 1-5) must not be confused with the description of things as they were given from v. 6.

Just another thought before we leave Micah 4 and Isa. 2. Micah 4: 4, in connection with the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, speaks of "every man under his vine and under his fig tree." We wish to point out that the same thing was prophesied by Zechariah in 3: 10. Now, Zechariah 2: 11 reads: "And **many nations** shall be joined to the Lord in that day, and shall be my people." This is, of course, just what Micah 4 and Isa. 2 have stated. They are pointing out the glory waiting obedient Israel. Zechariah's prediction that "Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls. . . . For I, saith the Lord, will be unto **her a wall of fire** round about" (2: 4-5) **couples up with** Ezek: 38: 11; and T.M., p. 18, applies it to **God's protection of His church**. And "the Branch" of Zech. 3: 8-9 is associated with "one stone" with "seven eyes," and the statement follows about every man sitting under his vine and his fig tree. This "Branch" is definitely stated in Luke 1: 78 to be Christ. This same "Branch" **"shall build the temple of the Lord: even He shall build the temple of the Lord . . . and He shall be a priest upon His throne** (the throne of grace in heaven); and the counsel of peace shall be between them both (God and His Son in the sanctuary above) . . . and they that are far off shall come and **build in the temple of the Lord**, and ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass **if ye diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God.**" (Zech. 6: 12-15.) Here the same truths are taught, the same blessed privileges awaiting the Jewish nation if it would only obey God. The magnificent temple of Ezekiel 40-48 **would have** been built, and people from afar off **would have** come to have helped them erect it, and **would have** come there to worship the God of Israel, and in a state of peace **would have** sat under their own fig trees and vines. These prophets are all urging upon the Jewish nation the high status to be theirs if only they would obey their God. These promises are **"all for us"** in a spiritual way to-day. To-day the **"Branch" is building the temple—His church**. (See T.M., 17; A.A., 595-8; 8T., 246; 7T., 170; etc.) As we have such abundant evidence that the prediction of the building of the temple in Zechariah is now being fulfilled in the building of the spiritual temple, the church, the statement regarding every man sitting under his own fig tree and vine, giving the picture of peace, likewise applies to the peace which comes to those who become members of Messiah's spiritual kingdom. And Micah 4 and Isa. 2, using precisely the same words, show that those chapters, too, must be understood as applying to Messiah's spiritual kingdom. And, of course, later, to the literal and visible kingdom of glory. The evidence already given is enough, but in Counsels to Teachers, Parents, and Students Regarding Christian Education," p. 455, God's servant makes clear the meaning God would have us obtain from Micah 4 and Isa. 2. In this quotation it will be noted the association of Micah 4: 2 with the description of the New Jerusalem given in Isa. 54: 11-14, and the promise to Israel of the new covenant.

Isa. 2: 1-5 and Micah 4, therefore, refer in a spiritual way to the church to-day, and to the New Jerusalem in the Messiah's eternal kingdom of glory, and, to-day, have not the slightest reference to literal Jerusalem, much less to the supposed crowning of Satan at Jerusalem in connection with a gathering of the nations there. Such theories do injustice to the grand teachings of the Bible.

This is not intended by any means to be an exhaustive study of "Armageddon," but merely an introduction which is designed to stimulate an enquiry into the fundamental principles of the third angel's message. There are many other features which the writer laments cannot be included within the exceedingly small limits of this brochure.

Writing of the Book of Revelation the messenger of God has declared, "When we as a people understand what **this book means to us**, there will be seen among us **a great revival**. **We do not understand fully** the lessons that it teaches, notwithstanding the injunction given us to search and study it." T.M. 113, 114. It is the writer's prayer that this endeavour to explain a little clearer a portion of the Book of Revelation, may be used of God to contribute in some small way to hasten the coming of the "great revival" which will surely come before the awful, **world-wide slaughter of Armageddon**.









# FUTURISM and the Antichrist of Scripture

By Louis F. Were

## A Solemn Warning and an Earnest Appeal to Prophetical Students

A WAVE of expectancy had swept over the land of Palestine. A deep impression had been made on the national mind of the Jews that the prophecies of the coming Messiah were soon to be fulfilled. Commencing with the devout who carefully studied the scrolls of the prophets, it spread to the ecclesiastical authorities who were constrained to do something in the matter, for the movement was rapidly gaining ground. They arose to direct the minds of the agitated people in a pleasing "orthodox" view. So the stirring of minds begun by the Holy Spirit leading men to a faithful acceptance of the coming Messiah, began to be side-tracked by that foe of God who is presented in Scripture as being indefatigable in unholy warfare; relentless and ceaseless in opposing fulfilling prophecy.

The learned rabbis taught that when the Messiah came, He would break the galling Roman yoke, and emancipating Israel, would elevate the liberated nation to the pinnacle of glory. This glowing outlook appealed to minds ready to receive pleasing interpretations. And so it came to

pass that when the true Messiah came "unto His own," "His own received Him not." John 1: 11. Why did they not receive Him? We stand amazed at the rejection of Christ by His own people. How accurately He fulfilled every detail of the Jewish prophets! How could they have been led to crucify the very One for whom all Jewry earnestly longed? They rejected Jesus because He did not fulfil the prophecies as interpreted by popular persuasion. See John 7: 27.

It is Satan's studied effort to blind the eyes to God's "present truth." God has promised that *every movement He inspires will have prophetic utterances to sustain it.* Amos 3: 7. He has seen where it would be necessary to meet the issues with special messages for the various times, and in the prophetic symbols He has hid the facts which would only be understood when the occasions demanded.

Satan, however, anticipating the fulfilment of these prophecies, devises false interpretations of them, referring their fulfilment to the future, and thus blinds eyes to the messages which God is sending at that particular time. Once people are persuaded

This brochure, written nearly 15 years ago, is included herewith because it unveils that false system of prophetic interpretation known as Futurism, of which the literal gathering of the nations to Megidde is a part.

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that these things are future, and hence do not directly concern them, they are indifferent to the stirring messages due for their time.

As we study the lives of the disciples up to the time of the resurrection of Jesus, we see how they were blinded to the real import of Christ's messages by the prevailing errors.

It is, therefore, not surprising that today many noble Christians are also blinded by prevailing errors and misinterpretations of prophecies. As in those days, some saw the light and walked out into it, so we trust it may be in our day.

Incredible as it may seem, many Protestant preachers are now teaching that the God-inspired interpretations of prophecy, so forcefully presented by the early Reformers, and which were the bulwark of the great Protestant movement, are erroneous, and that hence the Reformers' untruthful exegesis of Scripture was the mainstay, the foundation, of the great God-sent Reformation!

To give a little of the history of the change of belief among Protestants and why it is of the greatest importance to this time, is the object of these articles.

#### THE TRUE PROTESTANT POSITION

THE Reformers were unanimous in their interpretation that the antichrist of the Books of Daniel and the Revelation is the Papacy. The particular passages involved in this connection are those dealing with the "little horn" of Daniel 7, "the beast" of Revelation 13, and "the man of sin" of 2 Thessalonians 2, which the united voices of the fearless Reformers declared to be the Papacy. When James I asked Lord Bacon as to the person described under the title of

"The Man of Sin," his answer represented the undivided testimony of the Reformation Protestants: "Please, your Majesty, if the prophecy in 2 Thessalonians 2 were inserted in a warrant, I should apprehend the pope."

The Rev. Edward Nangle, of Ireland, wrote in 1866: "The identity of the pope with the predicted 'man of sin' is perfect. . . . This prophecy, rightly interpreted is, as Bishop Newton well observes, like a two-edged sword inflicting a deadly wound on popery on one side, and on infidelity on the other."

The power of this weapon in the conflict with popery, was strongly felt by the Reformers and the Jesuits at the time of the Reformation. The former wielded it with terrible effect in their onslaught on the Papacy, and the Jesuits had no shield to avert the strokes but a counter interpretation. They [the Jesuits] contended . . . that it applied not to the pope, but to antichrist, who was to appear at the end of this dispensation. . . . The whole body of the Reformers, English and Continental, without a single exception, maintained that the pope was the 'man of sin.' All the Reformed churches held the same view, as did also the most eminent Protestant authors, with hardly an exception, up to the early part of the present century, when a Romanising High Church clergyman took up the Jesuit view. The evil leaven, thus introduced into the Protestant church, soon worked through the mass to such an extent, that we believe at the present time the majority of the evangelical clergy as well as the whole Tractarian party, have gone over in this matter, from the Reformers to the Jesuits. [Unfortun-

ately an increasing number of Protestants, ignorant of the origin of this belief, are being taught that this is Protestantism. This teaching is perhaps as popular now as were the erroneous ideas concerning the Messiah in the days when Jesus was rejected.] "That interpretation includes a slander on the Reformers, and the whole Protestant world, for three centuries."

"The Papists in Dr. Willett's day (as represented by their Jesuit champion, Cardinal Bellarmine) contended that antichrist has not been yet revealed; that he is to be an individual who will make his appearance at the close of this dispensation for three years and a half; and that the prophecy of the 'man of sin' in 2 Thessalonians 2 has reference to this future antichrist, and not to the Pope of Rome; and these assertions . . . were attempted to be proved by their Jesuit advocate with the same arguments which are now urged in their defence by the Protestant writers. . . . who have adopted the Jesuit view."—"The Man of Sin," pages 2, 64, 252. (Italics mine.)

And then this writer of the last century presents the arguments used by those who hold the "Futurist" interpretation, showing how they are identical with, if not borrowed from, the pen of such Catholic writers as Cardinal Bellarmine.

The belief that the Papacy fulfils the prophecies relating to the antichrist, which was "the unanimous opinion of the whole body of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, and the unanimous judgment of every Protestant church for nearly three hundred years," should be given first and most serious consideration before accepting a theory of a future antichrist which was invented by

Rome in its controversy with the Reformers.

Dr. H. G. Guinness has warned us to be "on our guard against any system of prophetic interpretation which emanates from Rome. . . . We should lean to Protestant and not to papal interpretations."—"Light for the Last Days," page 8.

#### WHY FUTURISM WAS INVENTED

THE Rev. Joseph Tanner, B.A., in his book "Daniel and the Revelation," pages 16, 17, says: "So great a hold did the conviction that the Papacy was the antichrist gain upon the minds of men, that Rome at last saw she must bestir herself, and try, by putting forth other systems of interpretations, to counteract the identification of the Papacy with antichrist."

"Accordingly, towards the close of the century of the Reformation, two of the most learned doctors set themselves to the task, each endeavouring by different means to accomplish the same end, namely, that of diverting men's minds from perceiving the fulfilment of the prophecies of the antichrist in the papal system. The Jesuit Alcasar devoted himself to bringing into prominence the preterist method of interpretation, . . . and thus endeavoured to show that the prophecies of antichrist were fulfilled before the popes ever ruled at Rome, and therefore could not apply to the Papacy. On the other hand, the Jesuit Ribera tried to set aside the application of these prophecies to the papal power by bringing out the futurist system, which asserts that these prophecies refer properly, not to the career of the Papacy but to that of some future supernatural individual, who is yet to appear, and to continue in power



for three and a half years. Thus, as Alford says, the Jesuit Ribera, about A.D. 1580, may be regarded as the founder of the futurist system in modern times.

"It is a matter for deep regret that those who hold and advocate the futurist system at the present day, Protestants as they are for the most part, are thus playing into the hands of Rome, and helping to screen the Papacy from detection as the antichrist. It has been well said that 'futurism tends to obliterate the brand put by the Holy Spirit upon popery.' More especially is this to be deplored at a time when the papal antichrist seems to be making an expiring effort to regain his former hold on men's minds."

Another has written: "The futurist theory is simply one of the wiles of Satan to confuse the issue and divert the attention of the church of Christ from the real fulfilment. . . . Some Protestants have . . . laid hold of the interpretation invented after the Reformation by the Jesuit Ribera for the purpose of turning the edge of this truth from the Church of Rome. They, like him, are looking for a future literal antichrist. . . . Like all Jesuit interpretations, it has a clever semblance of truth, which often deceives the hurried or superficial reader."—*Albert Close*.

### Unanimity of Early Protestantism

DR. H. GRATTAN GUINNESS in his "Approaching End of the Age," pages 99-101, writing of the "historic Protestant view" of the prophecies which points out the Papacy as antichrist, says: "This view originated about the eleventh century, with those who even then be-

gan to protest against the growing corruptions of Rome. It grew among the Waldenses, Wycliffites, and Hussites, into a consistent scheme of interpretation, and was embraced with enthusiasm, and held, with intense conviction of its truth, by the Reformers of the sixteenth century. In their hands it became a powerful and formidable weapon, to attack and expose the mighty apostasy, with which they were called to do battle. From this time it spread with a rapidity that was astonishing, so that ere long it was received as a *self-evident and fundamental truth among Protestant churches everywhere*. [Italics mine.] It nerved the Reformers of England, France, Germany, Switzerland, Denmark, and Sweden, and the martyrs of Italy and Spain: it decided the conscientious and timid adherents of the Papacy to cross the Rubicon, and separate from the so-called Catholic Church; and it has kept all the Reformed churches since from attempted reunion with Rome.

"It was held and taught by Joachim Abbas, Walter Brute, Luther, Zwingle, Melancthon, Calvin, and all the rest of the Reformers; by Bullinger, Bale, and Foxe; by Brightman and Mede, Sir Isaac and Bishop Newton, Vitringa, Daubuz, and Whiston, as well as by Faber, Cunningham, Frere, Birks, and Elliott. . . . It met, of course, with the intense and bitter opposition from the church it branded as Babylon, and the power it denounced as antichrist and to this day it is rejected by all who in any way maintain or defend them."

I have selected three brief extracts from the commentaries of recognised conservative denominations to illustrate how all Protestant churches

once held this belief as a *fundamental of Protestantism*. Dr. Adam Clarke (Methodist), in his notes on Dan. 7: 25, "He shall speak great words against the Most High," says: "To none can this apply so well and so fully as to the pope of Rome." Dr. Albert Barnes (Presbyterian commentator), in his notes on Dan. 7: 25, says: "'Speaking great words against the Most High.' No Protestant will doubt that this is true of the Papacy, and no one acquainted with history will presume to call it in question." "'Making war with the saints.' Can anyone doubt that this is true of the Papacy?" Dr. Scott (Church of England), in notes on Daniel 7 and 8, says: "Whilst the prophet was considering these ten horns, he saw another little horn spring up among them. This evidently points out the Church and Bishop of Rome."

"The Rev. E. B. Elliott, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, spent twenty years studying in the preparation of his standard work, 'The Horæ Apocalypticae,' in which he proved papal Rome to be the antichrist of Scripture.

"Mr. Spurgeon, in his list of choice books for young ministers, recommends Elliott's work as 'the standard work on the Apocalypse.' The late Rev. Dr. Robert S. Candlish, Principal of New College, Edinburgh, who was a scholar of the first rank and had a wide acquaintance with theological literature, in a lecture on 'The Pope the Antichrist of Scripture,' spoke of Elliott as 'among the most learned, profound, and able expositors any of the books of Scripture have ever had.'

"These are the opinions of two of our greatest Christian leaders of the

value of Elliott's work, and his interpretation agrees in the main points with that of the great outstanding leaders ever since the Reformation." —*"The Hand of God and Satan in History," by A. Close, page 155.*

### WILL PROTESTANTISM TURN BACK?

Now while it is refreshing to read the declarations of these leading churchmen, teaching definitely that "the pope is the antichrist of Scripture," it has been my painful lot to sit and listen to men, representing the same denominations as those spiritual giants, now teaching the popular, Jesuit-prepared theories of an antichrist who is yet future.

As I have read the commentaries of the leading Protestant churches in which such prophecies as the "little horn" of Daniel 7 are definitely *proved to be fulfilled in the history of the Papacy*, I can only marvel that so many adherents of these respective denominations, and of others, now prefer the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church to those of their godly denominational founders. It must be that many are unacquainted with the teachings of their spiritual progenitors, and do not know the origin of the doctrines of futurism. It is the desire to acquaint such with the facts that has prompted these lines.

Dr. H. Grattan Guinness in his "Romanism and the Reformation," pages 250-260, has irrefutably shown that futurism came from Rome to oppose the inspired declarations of the Reformers that the Papacy was the antichrist. Space will permit of but a few extracts from this masterly work. He writes of the Reformation: "From the first, and throughout, that movement was energised and guided



by the prophetic Word. Luther never felt strong and free to war against the papal apostasy till he recognised the pope as antichrist. It was then he burned the papal Bull. Knox's first sermon, the sermon which launched him on his mission as a Reformer, was on the prophecies concerning the Papacy. The Reformers embodied their interpretations of prophecy in their confessions of faith, and Calvin in his 'Institutes.'

"All the Reformers were *unanimous* in the matter. . . . And *their interpretation of these prophecies determined their reforming action.* . . . It nerved them to resist the claims of that apostate church to the uttermost. It made them martyrs, it sustained them at the stake. And the views of the Reformers were shared by thousands, by hundreds of thousands. They were adopted by princes and peoples. . . .

"To resist the use to which Scripture prophecy was put by the Reformers is no light or unimportant matter. The system of prophetic interpretation, known as *futurism*, *does resist this use.* It condemns the interpretations of the Reformers. It condemns the views of all these men, and of all the martyrs, and of all the confessors and faithful witnesses of Christ for long centuries. It condemns the Albigenses, the Waldenses, and the Wycliffites, and the Hussites, the Lollards, the Lutherans, the Calvinists; it condemns them all, and *upon a point on which they are all agreed*, an interpretation of Scripture which they embodied in their solemn confessions and sealed with their blood. It condemns the spring of their action, the foundation of the structure they erected. *How daring* is this act, and *how destitute* of justification! What an opposition to the

*pillars* of a work most manifestly divine! For it is no less than this, for futurism asserts that Luther and all the Reformers were wrong in this fundamental point.

"And *whose interpretation of prophecy does it justify and approve? That of the Romanists.* Let this be clearly seen. Rome felt the force of these prophecies, and sought to evade it. It had no way but to deny their applicability. It could not deny their existence in Scripture. They were there plainly enough. But it denied that these prophecies referred to the Roman Church and its head. It pushed them aside. It shifted them from the entire field of mediæval and modern history. As to Babylon the Great, it asserted that it meant Rome pagan, not Rome papal. Rome pagan shed all the blood referred to in Revelation 17 and 18. Rome Christian had shed none of it. Prophecy was eloquent about the deeds of the Cæsars, but silent as to those of the popes; and this though the persecution perpetrated by the popes far exceeded those of the Cæsars. Prophecy expended its strength in warning the church of the perils from heathenism, which it perfectly understood, and was speechless as to the far greater perils arising from the Christian apostasy on which it needed the fullest warning and instruction. It was eagle-eyed as to the dangers without, but blind to the dangers from within. It guarded and guided the church of the three first centuries, but *left the church of the next thousand years and more without a lamp to light its footsteps.*

"As to the prophecies of the man of sin, or antichrist, these [they teach] had nothing to do with the Middle Ages, or with the Roman

popes, or the long central centuries of the church's sorest conflicts; they only referred to a diminutive interval in the far-off future, at the end of the world. The man of sin was only an ephemeral persecutor. His whole power was to continue but three and a half years. He was to be a cunning Jew of the tribe of Dan; a clever infidel, who was to call himself God, and set himself up in a Jewish temple at Jerusalem. Christians have nothing to do with him as such. A Jew was to do all the mischief. The whole evil was but a Jewish infidel spasm in the very last hour of history before the second advent. Therefore the Reformers were all wrong in their denunciations of the Papacy. They were foolish, misguided, unreasonable, fanatical, and the popes were uncondemned by the voices of the prophets. Daniel and John said nothing about them. *They* were not the predicted apostates. . . . The prophecies which those contemptible Reformers and miserable so-called martyrs said applied to them did nothing of the sort; it was folly to suppose they did. They applied to other people and to other circumstances. They only applied to paganism and infidelity: a past and bygone paganism, and a future shortlived infidelity, and nothing more. *Three centuries in the past, and three years in the future*, that was all they had anything to do with. As to the *fifteen centuries* which lay between, they had no bearing upon them whatever. . . . The thunders of prophecy were *not directed against them, but against those dead Cæsars, and that unborn Jew.* . . .

"Which think you were right in their interpretations of Scripture? Those proud popes, those cruel inquisitors, those inhuman monsters

who mangled the bodies of holy men and women in their torture chambers, . . . or those pure and persecuted saints . . . those noble confessors, Reformers, and martyrs? With one mind and mouth all these Protestants agreed in the substances of their protests. To them Rome was Babylon, and its proud head antichrist. Were they all mistaken, deluded, and their cruel, tyrannical oppressors and persecutors correct? What think you? . . .

"Futurism has crept into the Protestant church, broken down these sacred walls. Romanists, ritualists, and Protestant futurists are *all agreed* as to the non-applicability of Scripture prophecies to the Church of Rome and the Papacy. . . . What then is to keep out the incoming papal flood? The Word of prophecy in its solemn warning of the dangers the church has to encounter, the foes it has to resist, is asserted to be silent as to this. Why then should this be feared? The Reformers were mistaken; the popes were right. . . . All these were right in rejecting the fundamental position that papal Rome is Babylon, and its head antichrist; and all the Reformers, without an exception, were wrong in maintaining it; they were foolish interpreters of the 'sure Word of prophecy,' and utterly in error as to the real testimony of Scripture concerning the Church of Rome.

"Is this the position you adopt? Is this the conclusion you defend? Are these the views you advocate? You, a Protestant, and this, *after all that has been written upon the subject*, and all the blaze of light which history and experience have poured upon it? If it is, *look to it that you be not found fighting against the*



truth, warring against the Word of God, resisting the testimony of the prophetic spirit, hindering the work of the Reformation, promoting the progress of the apostasy, opposing Christ, and helping antichrist."

### Clouding the Real Issue

IT is remarkable that, out of three classes of interpretations of the pre-advent visions of the Apocalypse, two came from Roman Catholic Jesuits. The preterist scheme, which considers "these prophecies to have been fulfilled in the downfall of the Jewish nation and of the old Roman empire, limiting their range thus to the first six centuries of the Christian era, and making Nero antichrist, originated with the Jesuit Alcasar towards the end of the sixteenth century."—"The Approaching End of the Age," pages 97, 98.

From Rome this teaching spread to some hypnotised Protestants who did not see that it was a kind of smoke-screen to hide the real antichrist. But a God-aroused Protestantism urged all to interpret the prophecies as fulfilling before the eyes of all in the history of the Papacy. Rome stirred herself to oppose and to overthrow the mighty power of the Reformation. The preterist scheme was not sufficient to blind the eyes of the most cautious of an awakening people to the true antichrist; so another system of interpretation was devised more completely and more innocently to screen the antichrist. Therefore to meet the issue the futurist view was invented, teaching "that the prophetic visions of Revelation, from chapters 4 to 19, prefigure events still wholly future, and not to take place till just at the

close of this dispensation. . . . This view gives the literal Israel a large place in the Apocalypse, and expects a personal infidel antichrist, who shall bitterly oppress the saints for three years and a half, near the date of the second advent, thus interpreting time as well as much else in the Apocalypse, literally."—*Ib.*, page 100.

It is true that some of the primitive Fathers of the Catholic Church agree in several points with the futurist scheme, including a future personal antichrist; but, as is well known to Bible students who have made a thorough investigation of the use of prophecy, the fulfilment of a prophecy is only known in detail when it becomes history. Those living in the days when spiritual darkness was creeping over the earth could only speculate as to the meaning of the prophecies regarding the antichrist and of things then future. But when a prophecy is fulfilled or is fulfilling, then God awakens the minds of men to study that particular prophecy and to observe its fulfilment in current history.

When John the Baptist was asked why he preached as he did, he replied that he was fulfilling a certain prophecy. See Isa. 40: 3, also John 1: 23. When he was afterwards incarcerated in his gloomy prison cell, he sent messengers to inquire of Jesus, "Art Thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" That is, he had read the prophecies of the coming Messiah, and now he wanted to know if Jesus was fulfilling those prophecies.

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see." Matt. 11: 2-4. Jesus' reply shows how much He based His work on the fulfilment of the prophecies regarding

Himself. The answer (in effect) came back: "I am fulfilling the prophecies outlined for the Messiah." But John, who had imbibed much of the erroneous theories of the "orthodoxy" of the time, had read into the prophecies what was not there regarding the coming One, as all do who prematurely detail futurity by prophecy. Christ told the messengers to return and show John "again," that the fulfilment of prophecy was His badge of authority, and He urged the friends of John to tell John what He was doing, and to ask John to see how these things actually did fulfil every specification of the Messiah's work.

All the movements of Scripture were started by an appeal to the pronouncements of the prophets. It is surprising, to those who have not previously studied the Scriptures closely, to observe how the preachers mentioned in the Bible drew the attention of their hearers to the fact that certain prophecies were meeting fulfilment in their day, and that God, who alone could foretell the future, was now speaking to them in these fulfilments. So, in harmony with this principle, the Reformers pointed to the unfolding history of the Papacy as the positively clear fulfilment of prophecy.

Dr. H. G. Guinness in his "Approaching End of the Age," pages 100, 101, writes of the futurist view: "In its present form, however, it may be said to have originated, at the end of the sixteenth century, with the Jesuit Ribera, who, moved like Alcasar, to relieve the Papacy from the terrible stigma cast upon it by the Protestant interpretation, tried to do so by referring these to the distant future, instead of like Alcasar to the distant past. For a considerable period

this view was confined to Romanists, [Italics mine], and was refuted by several masterly Protestant works. But of late years it has sprung up afresh, and sprung up (strange to say) among Protestants. It was revived by such writers as the two Maitlands, Burgh, Tyso, Dr. Todd, the leaders of the 'Brethren' generally, and by some Tractarian expositors also. It is held thus by extreme parties; by those who, though Protestants, are ashamed of the Reformation, speak of it as an unwarrantable schism, and verge as closely on Rome as is possible."

Are we warranted in believing that God, who has prophesied concerning many of the nations, at times going into details, has passed by the greatest power governing the largest number of people for the longest period of time? Is it possible that this power, with its stupendous claims for its leaders of taking God's place on earth, of possessing infallibility, of having power to forgive sins, with their centuries of world control during which they destroyed many millions of God's people, has had no cognisance taken of it in God's omniscient prophecies? Is it possible that the prophets, whose prophetic eyes have swept down the ages foretelling the details along the way, could possibly have omitted mentioning the most gigantic religious system of all, and then occupy so much space in the blessed Book foretelling things to occur in connection with a future Jewish remnant and the doings of an infidel antichrist who would reign for three and a half years after the church had gone to glory? Would God make no mention of the terrible dangers through which His people must pass and the terrible doings of the apostate church in its fury



against God's saints? Is it possible that the Bible has no word of comfort, no word of guidance, for the church of God during that long night of darkness, no room in the prophecies for the greatest tragedy in all the history of the church since Creation, because the space was occupied by prophecies regarding the doings of one infidel whose few moments of fury would be witnessed when the church was gone from this earth! Of what benefit is it to saints to know what is going to happen when the church is gone to heaven to be with her Lord? Is it possible that there are no prophecies to guide the church while it is bitterly contending with the forces of Satan, but only hazy pictures of the doings of an ephemeral antichrist which would not concern the church whatever! I stand amazed at the gullibility of these good folk.

### Blunting the Edge of Practical Truth

IT is necessary now to point out the great danger facing the present-day prophetic student. To believe that many of the prophecies of Revelation are not to be fulfilled till after the church has gone to her reward, causes the believer thereof to lose interest in these prophecies as having no practical value for the present; and no matter how the staggering events of these times parallel those prophecies, they will be blind to it all. For does he not know that they refer to the future? Remember "that it is possible for the plainest and most satisfactory fulfilment of a prophecy to be forced on the attention, and yet be unperceived: witness the Jews in the days of Christ: witness the disciples by the

empty sepulchre."—*The Approaching End of the Age*, page 129.

Even so today prophecy of the greatest importance is being fulfilled before the eyes of this last generation; but many will be, and are being, blinded to it because they look into the future for the fulfilment.

Observe these pregnant statements of Dr. H. G. Guinness in the book from which we have quoted above: "As to every singular particular noted in the sure Word of prophecy, the plainest correspondence can be traced between the fourfold prediction and the papal fulfilment; and we cannot refrain from deprecating most earnestly the mischievous system of interpretation which teaches that this clear, undeniable, and grandly terrible accomplishment is *not the fulfilment intended*."

"Standing face to face with Jesus Christ, the disciples of John inquired in their master's name, 'Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?' They were answered by deeds, not words. The Lord wrought Messianic miracles in their presence, and said, 'Go and tell John what things ye have seen and heard'; that is, *He did the deeds which it had been predicted that the Messiah would do, and all were responsible to draw thence the inference that He was the Messiah*. So pointing to the church history of the last twelve centuries, we say, The Papacy has done the deeds which were to be done by the oft-predicted power of evil foretold in the Word of God! And we believe that *Christians are responsible to draw from the historical fact the inference, that the Papacy is the power that was thus predicted*."—*Pages 216, 217*.

"Hence our deep regret that futurist expositions should take off the

edge of this mightily practical truth; and that, as at the Reformation, they blinded the eyes of Papists to the true character of the Papacy—so they should *now blind Protestants to the real nature of the days in which we live*; depriving them of the certainty afforded by the sure Word of prophecy in this time of the end, and throwing them back on the uncertainty of earlier ages.

"A moment's reflection will show that in the past, while the beginnings of the ages and dispensations had general promises and predictions only, *chronological prophecy was always permitted to throw its solemnly helpful guiding light on the close*. The first prediction of this character ever given was that of the 120 years to elapse prior to the Flood, that great *close* of the antediluvian age. The second—the 400 years to the Exodus, marked the *close* of the entire patriarchal dispensation; the third—the 65 years to elapse before Ephraim's overthrow, led up to the *close* of the kingdom of the Ten Tribes; and the fourth—the 70 years' captivity of Judah, marked out by its commencement the *close* of Jewish monarchy, and by its termination, the *close* of the Babylonian empire; the fifth—the 490 years to Messiah the Prince, led up to the *close* of the Jewish dispensation.

"God graciously provided the help of chronologic prophecy to sustain to the end the faith and hope of His people. They who in this day despise that aid, or make it void by a fanciful, unhistoric, futurist interpretation, *cast aside an invaluable weapon for the special conflict of these closing days*."—*Ib.*, pages 354, 355.

The prophecies regarding the antichrist, which the Reformers so

unanimously preached, were not completely fulfilled in their day; they were to be completed in this generation when the work of the Reformation would be completed and the work of antichrist fully revealed. These same prophecies foretold of a great message to go to all the world with a definite call revealing the whole of God's truth, which the Reformers were only beginning to see. This message, based upon the prophecies uncompleted in the days of the Reformers, is now being given to all the world. In Rev. 14: 6-14 is a prophecy of a threefold message which is clearly set forth as being given to all the world just prior to the second advent. See verse 14.

The coming of Jesus is near at hand, as is acknowledged by many, but where is that threefold message which must of necessity be today going to the world to fulfil this prophecy? Why is it that the staggering fulfilment is not more widely recognised? Because Satan, a master student of the prophetic Word, knowing that before the second advent these prophecies would meet their completion and that the people pictured in prophecy would arise as messengers in the past had arisen, with an appeal to the prophecies which foretold their work, caused to be invented a system of interpretation of prophecy which would not only hide his agents in the days of the beginning of the Reformation, but would screen them for all time and would blind the eyes of many of the present generation so that they would not see or not believe the complete fulfilment of the prophecies in the message God is now sending to all the world.

How wonderfully his design has worked! Here are the facts that a people, proving their position by the



prophecies, are calling the attention of all to the work of the "little horn" of Daniel 7, where its attack on the unchangeable law of God is outlined. All the Reformers and all the Protestant churches for three hundred years believed and taught that this "little horn" symbolised the Papacy. They did not know just where such a belief would eventually take their spiritual descendants, God very definitely stating that not until "the time of the end" (Dan. 12: 4) would the full significance of these things be seen and taught. Then all the Protestant churches were likewise unanimous in their teachings concerning the perpetuity of God's law, while Roman Catholicism believed it could alter God's law, and has attempted to put its belief into practice. Dan. 7: 25. Protestantism differed from Roman Catholicism in two fundamental principles; namely, the Papacy was the antichrist, and God's law was immutable. Roman Catholicism taught that antichrist was future, and that God's law could be changed to suit circumstances.

### Futurism and Law Abolition

THOSE who have followed Rome in the theory of futurism have likewise followed her in teaching that God's law could be changed, and had actually been changed, holding that the observance of Sunday instead of the seventh-day Sabbath demonstrated such a change. At one time all the Protestant churches emphasised the binding nature of God's law, but coincident with their acceptance of papal futurism they have now swung around to the papal opposition to God's law. And let it be observed that the very ones mentioned by Dr. Guinness as

the chief instruments for the introduction of futurism into Protestantism are also the fiercest opponents of the truth of the immutability of the law of Jehovah. They are the ones who have largely led Protestants to abandon their firm belief in the unchangeable nature of God's law. It appears therefore to be plain to the onlooker, anxious only for truth, that *futurism has in some way an association with a spirit of opposition to the unchanging nature of God's law, for the two things always go together.*

While Protestants held to the truth that the Papacy is the antichrist of Scripture, they also held to the perpetuity of the law of God, as may be seen by reading their articles of faith. But now that they are swinging over to papal futurism, they are likewise emphasising more and more the papal doctrine that God's law could be changed, and boasting of a freedom from that law, which agrees with papal assumptions of having had power to change it. Therefore it is self-evident even now that theologically "all the world wonders after the beast," as the prophecy declared it would do before the second advent. Rev. 13: 3. All nations are even now being made drunk with the wine of Rome's doctrines. Rev. 17: 2; 18: 3. This solemn fact, it is likewise prophesied, would be proclaimed to the world before Jesus comes. See Rev. 14: 8, 14.

Now here is a remarkable fact: It is predicted that all those who will not keep God's commandments will fall into harmony with Rome in the main fundamentals. See Rev. 13: 8 and compare with Rev. 21: 27; 22: 14. All those whose names are in the book of life and who oppose Rome's doctrines believe God's law is un-

changeable and of supreme authority. As Satan was the author of disregard for God's law, and also the author of futurism, we can read his designs for these last days in the great struggle between the forces of good and evil. *He devised futurism as a system of prophecy which would blind the people's eyes to the last great message now going to all the world, and which is fulfilling the prophecies.* Scripture is very plain in its pronouncements to the effect that the controversy would close with a great conflict over the law of God.

"And the dragon [Satan, verse 9] was wroth with the woman [the church, 2 Cor. 11: 2, etc.], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." Rev. 12: 17. The "remnant," or *last of the church*, is to hold to the perpetuity of the law, and will be against futurism. How do futurists answer this plain prediction? They answer it by relegating it to the future, *while they assist in the very fulfilment of it*, preaching that the law was abolished or changed, and manifesting a wrathful spirit against the upholders of the law's immutability. This can be seen in the tracts written against them, and I can abundantly testify concerning it from my experiences in evangelistic work. It is a notable fact that many futurists write tracts opposing, and vigorously preach against, the people who are giving the message predicted in prophecy to precede the coming of Jesus; but they say no word against the Papacy with its dark history. The reason is very apparent to the thoughtful.

The Christian faith is built upon the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament. The apostles

were chosen to show the people that Jesus *had* accomplished the prophetic requirements. They declared, in effect: "Do not look into the future for the completion of these prophecies, Jesus *has* fulfilled them in every detail." In these words of Scripture they frequently said: "We are His witnesses of these things." Acts 1: 8; 2: 32; 3: 15; 5: 32; 10: 39.

Hear the earnest preaching of Peter as recorded in Acts 3: 15-24: "We are witnesses. . . . But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of *all* His prophets, that Christ should suffer, *He hath so fulfilled.* . . . Yea, and *all* the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after, as many as have spoken, have likewise foretold of *these days.*"

### JUDAISM MADE A SIMILAR MISTAKE

How remarkably do our days parallel those of our blessed Saviour's earthly pilgrimage. The Jews, in rejecting the message which Christ brought to them based upon the prophecies, placed the fulfilment of those prophecies far in the future; and yet, as Paul so clearly stated in his sermon, "because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets [they thought they knew them], which are read every Sabbath day, *they have fulfilled them in condemning Him.*" Acts 13: 27. Continuing, the inspired apostle said: "*And when they had fulfilled all that was written of Him, they took Him down from the tree, and laid Him in a sepulchre. But God raised Him from the dead: and He was seen many days of them which came up with Him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are His witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you the glad*



tidings, how that the promise [prophecy] which was made unto the fathers, *God hath fulfilled* the same unto us their children, in that He hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written." Verses 29-33.

Then he quotes Old Testament predictions (verses 33-37), saying in effect: "Jesus *hath* fulfilled these prophecies"; and those who today are looking into the future for their fulfilment, are prevented by Satan from seeing that they "*are* accomplished." Paul urged his hearers to see how marvellously Jesus *had* fulfilled the Messianic predictions.

"They *had* fulfilled all that was written of Him," even by their rejection of Him; yet they did not see that *they had fulfilled, and were fulfilling, the very prophecies which they relegated to the unknown future.* No wonder Paul uttered this warning which is applicable today: "Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Acts 13: 40, 41.

Today futurists, like the unbelieving Jews, are still looking to the future for the fulfilment of prophecies which have been, and are being, fulfilled in every detail.

### Fanciful and Unwarranted Interpretations

**F**UTURISM, which is sweeping the world, contrary to the foundation of the Reformation, is knowingly, in face of light from heaven, carrying with it a changed law. The continuance of the Reformation depends upon adherence to

the fundamentals of Protestantism, and builds on the work of the Reformers. Present-day Protestantism must see and teach what had not, in the beginning of the Reformation, impressed itself on the minds of these good men. *The time was not then ripe* for making known to the world that the papal antichrist had, during the long years of its supremacy, changed its day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday.

Quite a number of the prophecies connected with the work of antichrist speak of a world-wide message unveiling the facts of antichrist's work against God's law, as seen in the attempted change of the Sabbath. Now the issue for the world today is: If these prophecies picturing the complete revelation of antichrist's work are future, then Rome was right at the time of the Reformation, and the founders of the Protestant churches were wrong. If, on the other hand, Rome was wrong and the Reformers right, then from the same prophecies, which were the foundation of the Reformation, must be preached a return to the Sabbath of God which was changed by the antichrist. In harmony with the prophecies, such a world-wide message is today being proclaimed in more than 400 different languages, and entering a new language at the rate of about one each week. Such a phenomenal movement in religion has not been seen before on this planet.

Some, clearly seeing the issue, prefer Roman Catholic futurism, which hides the Sabbath message from the eyes of the present, and postpones the fulfilment of these prophecies to the future under the reign of an imaginary antichrist. *Others are ignorant of the issue, and for their sake*

*the facts are presented.* If the Papacy is not the antichrist, as all the Reformers and all Protestant churches for three centuries declared, then Protestants owe Catholics many apologies; but no mistake was made in so designating the Papacy.

If the reader has previously believed in the futuristic view, I make this appeal to him to give earnest serious study to the historical Protestant view. Do not accept futurism because it is now popular; remember how popular, and yet misleading, were the interpretations of the Messianic prophecies of the Jews, which *led that people to fulfil those very prophecies in their rejection of Him, while they looked into the future for the Messiah to come.* Jesus earnestly preached to that people, blinded by satanic, and hence popular, systems of interpretation: "The time is fulfilled." Mark 1: 15. "*This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.*" Luke 4: 21. And He proved it by a masterly knowledge of the prophetic passages which set forth His glorious work, and gave overwhelming evidences by wonderful miracles. And yet how few there were among so many students of prophecy who believed in Him! They did not see the fulfilment of the prophecies in Him and His work, because they felt that their fulfilment was still future!

History will repeat itself (Eccl. 1: 9), but let it not occur with you, dear reader. Look and see! Wonderful prophecies are being fulfilled today before your very eyes.

May God guard you from the seductive system of interpretation which is blinding the eyes of many to God's great message now going to all the earth in harmony with the inspired prophecies.

### FACTS FACING FUTURISM

EARLY believers, taught by the disciples, believed that pagan Rome was the hinderer which prevented the rise of antichrist. 2 Thess. 2: 7. Pagan Rome, being "taken out of the way," enabled "that wicked" (verse 7) to be "revealed." See verse 8.

Christ, Paul prophesied, would not come until antichrist should be revealed. Verses 1-3. The Papacy has been revealed. The plan was not that Christ should first come and then antichrist would be revealed, as futurism teaches.

The "man of sin" was to be revealed, not by the departure of the church from the earth, but through a "falling away" from apostolic teachings, which is true of the history of the Papacy.

Of the hinderer it reads, "until *he* be taken out of the way." The church is never in all Scripture spoken of as "*he*"—always feminine. It is incongruous to say of the Holy Spirit, "*He* be taken out of the way."

The temple in which antichrist would sit in authority is God's spiritual temple—His church. Verse 4; 1 Tim. 3: 15; 1 Cor. 3: 17; Eph. 2: 22.

The "mystery of iniquity" was "already" working in Paul's day, and soon afterwards developed into the Papacy. Verse 7; Acts 20: 28-30.

The expression "son of perdition" (verse 3) is only used in one other place in the New Testament, and is there applied to Judas, who was *not a blasphemous infidel* but a *professed follower of Jesus*, even when betraying Him. Even so antichrist "the son of perdition" will not be a blasphemous infidel as futurism teaches, but an apostate church professing to serve Christ while working contrary to Him.



Antichrist's "blasphemy" (Rev. 13: 6) is manifested in a false system of worship. Isa. 65: 17; Eze. 20: 27, 28; Rom. 2: 24, etc.

Antichrist's denial is seen in its works, more than in its words. 1 John 2: 22; Titus 1: 16.

The "lawless" one is one who behaves contrary to God's law, which the Papacy has done, ordering the destruction of those whom it considers heretics, and attempting to change God's law. See Dan. 7: 25. God regards the law thus changed as belonging to the lawless antichrist. See Ps. 94: 20, 21.

#### FUTURISM HAS AN INTERPRETATION OF ITS OWN WHICH IS FOREIGN TO THE WHOLE PLAN OF SCRIPTURE

To fit in with futurism, the "beast" of Revelation 13 is forced to represent an individual antichrist, when a cruel or wild "beast" is never employed to represent an individual in all the symbols of Scripture prophecies. See Dan. 7: 1-8, 23; 8: 1-11, 20, 21, etc. Beasts in prophecy represent powers governing for many years with a succession of rulers.

Because of the use of the definite article "*the*" in the expressions, "the man of sin," and "the antichrist," it is said that antichrist can only be one man. But as the Rev. E. Nangle has shown in "The Man of Sin," page 158:—

"We shall now show that the supposition that the words 'man of sin' designate an official succession, or class, is *not* an unwarranted assumption.

"Thus in Num. 35: 25-28, the succession of high priests is spoken of as *the* high priest.

"In 1 Sam. 8: 11, the succession of

kings in Israel is spoken of as *the* king.

"In Rom. 1: 17, all justified persons are spoken of as *the* just man.

"In 2 Tim. 3: 17, the whole succession and body of Christian ministers are designated *the* man of God."

"In Heb. 9: 7 and 24, the succession of high priests is spoken of as *the* high priest."

"In 2 John 5: 7, the '*many* deceivers,' who, as the apostle says, are entered into the world, are described as *the* antichrist."

"In Rev. 12: 1-6, the church of Christ during the period of 'a thousand two hundred and threescore days' is described as *the* woman."

"Likewise in Rev. 17: 4, the Church of Rome, as she persecuted the Lord's people for many ages, is described as *the* woman drunken with the blood of saints," etc.

Mr. Nangle goes on to show how even the hinderer was also a succession of men—the emperors of the pagan Roman empire.

In all the New Testament "saint" means Christian, but futurism indicates that "saint" in the Apocalypse means a Jew. Why is the difference here?

In all the New Testament the church is referred to as the bride of Christ, and the pronoun "she" should always be used; but a special licence must be issued for the sake of futurism in 2 Thess. 2: 7, where the hinderer to antichrist (claimed by futurists to be the church) is spoken of as "he." Some futurists, too, make the "man-child" of Rev. 12: 5 (obviously Jesus) represent the church taken up at the second advent, which is contrary to the figures used elsewhere in the New Testament.

God's temple on earth in this dispensation, as is definitely taught in all the New Testament, is His church (1 Tim. 3: 15, etc.); but in the passages in which *futurism* is affected, there alone it is mistakenly held to mean a literal building. 2 Thess. 2: 4.

The "son of perdition," applied elsewhere to a professed follower of Christ must, when interpreted by futuristic theories, refer to an infidel antichrist, giving it a different meaning from the one definitely given in Scripture.

To "blaspheme," which is used in Scripture concerning a false system of worship (Isa. 65: 17, etc.), means infidel utterances according to futurism. To "deny" is likewise misused by futurism to mean a direct infidel denial by antichrist, whereas Scripture teaches that we may profess to serve God, but "in works deny Him." See Titus 1: 16; Matt. 10: 32; Luke 9: 23, etc.

All Scripture is given to the church to be profitable now (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17); but futurism makes the last communication of Christ to His church (Revelation) of no practical value, instead of *most important* as one would expect it to be.

Jesus urges the church to keep the sayings recorded in this Book of Revelation (Rev. 1: 1, 3; 22: 6); but futurism teaches that it is impossible to keep the major portion of them, for they are future and do not affect the church, as the church will have been taken away before the events prophesied take place.

Futurism makes the "hereafter" of Rev. 4: 1 mean that what is written after that verse applies after the church has been taken away, whereas any other person would read it as *from John's day*, as will be seen by

comparing Rev. 1: 19 and 4: 1 with Rev. 22: 10.

It is said the first three chapters of Revelation bring us to the church's removal, and then "hereafter" means from then; but that reasoning would destroy the force of the admonition to the church to keep the prophecies of this book (Rev. 22: 7, 9) "*for the time is at hand*." Verse 10. Turning to Revelation 20, 21, and 22 we find described the destruction of the wicked and the rejuvenation of the world, wherein are the saved of a completed redemption. Now it is evident that what follows the first few chapters of Revelation is not to be understood as taking place after the wicked are destroyed and the new earth established, for verse 11 speaks of the close of probation; verse 12 speaks of the second advent; verse 16 directs that the Book of Revelation be read in all the churches; verse 17 represents Christ as still pleading for sinners *after they would have been all destroyed*, if futurism is true; and in verses 19, 20 people are threatened with the seven last plagues which fall *before* Christ comes.

#### Futurism Introduces Unheard-of Rules

AS all know who are free from bias, the prophets retrace their steps often in their predictions, following one theme to completion, then going over the same ground with additional features. So by the "hereafter" of Rev. 4: 1, the angel comes back to John's day and describes another series of events reaching to the coming of Christ. This is how our godly Protestant translators understood it, as will be seen in the synopsis at the heading



of the sixth chapter of Revelation: "The opening of the seals in order, and what followed thereupon, containing a prophecy to the end of the world." "Nearly all the writers of the first fifteen centuries of the Christian era entertained the view that the Apocalypse was a comprehensive prophecy, reaching from the date of its publication to the end of all things."—"The Approaching End of the Age," page 130.

Futurism would alter this established belief.

All the New Testament terms regarding the old Jewish services are given a Christian spiritual meaning. See Heb. 13: 15, 16; Col. 2: 11-13; Rom. 2: 27, 28; John 6: 31-35, etc. But futurism makes the Jewish imagery different. Why?—To make it fit in with the theory.

The prophecies of Scripture start in the time of the prophet who delivered them and unfold without any gaps till the consummation. See Daniel 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, etc. But futurism makes things different in those parts which affect it, and places about 2,000 years between the parts of the prophecies, and that without the slightest indication from those prophecies that this was intended by the divine Author of the prophecy.

An astounding exegesis of Dan. 9: 24-27 by futurists, in which the seventieth week is wrenched from the seventy weeks for the Jews, and about 2,000 years placed in between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth week, without any hint from, and even contrary to, the Scripture concerned, illustrates the extent to which people will go in maintaining a pet and popular theory. The Scripture makes it as plain as language can make it that all that was prophesied

to take place in connection with this period was to occur between the beginning and the ending of those seventy weeks. I refer the reader to Philip Mauro's "The Seventy Weeks and the Great Tribulation," wherein this writer (unfortunately himself a believer in the future antichrist) shows the utter nonsense of separating any part of the seventy weeks.

In this book Philip Mauro says: "Who is 'the prince that shall come?' . . . it would seem quite clear that 'the prince,' whose people were to destroy the city and the sanctuary, was Titus, the son of the then Emperor Vespasian, he (Titus) being the 'prince'; . . . in fact we are bold to say that the words of the prophecy, which are the words of God sent directly from heaven to Daniel, do not reasonably admit of any other interpretation. Nor, so far as we are aware, was any other meaning ever put upon them until within recent years, and then only by those belonging to a particular 'school' of interpretation. [Zealous futurists.] This is a very radical idea, one which changes the entire meaning of this basic prophecy, and affects the interpretation of all prophecy. It transfers the main incidents of the prophecy of the seventy weeks from Christ to antichrist, and removes them bodily from the distant past to the uncertain future, thus separating them far from all connection with the period of seventy weeks to which God assigns them. This manner of dealing with Scripture is, so far as our experience goes, without parallel or precedent in the field of exegesis. Is it sound and sober interpretation, or is it playing pranks with prophecy?"

Yes, futurism does have an interpretation of its own, and one entirely foreign to the Scripture.

Placing the events of the seventieth week in their right place, with the cross of Jesus the focus of the prophecy, Mr. Mauro says:—

"On the other hand, to make this last week refer to a paltry bargain between antichrist (or a supposed Roman prince) and some apostate Jews of the future, for the renewal (and that for a space of only seven years) of those sacrifices which God has long ago abolished for ever, is to intrude into this great scripture a matter of trifling importance, utterly foreign to the subject in hand, and to bring the entire prophecy to an absurdly lame and impotent conclusion."—Page 88.

"We come now to the view, held and taught by many modern expositors of good repute, that the week which came next after the sixty-ninth week from the starting-point, and which was in fact the seventieth actual week as time is ordinarily reckoned, is not to be taken as the seventieth week of the prophecy; but that the prophetic period is to be regarded as having been interrupted at the end of the sixty-ninth week, 'the clock of prophecy having stopped.' They hold that some period of seven years yet in the future is to be taken (when it comes) and added to the sixty-nine weeks now in the past to make up the complete number of seventy. Or, as it is sometimes expressed, this entire age of over 1,900 years comes in as a 'parenthesis' between the sixty-ninth and the seventieth week of the prophetic period. We deem this view to be erroneous, and believe we can show clearly that it is not supported by, but is contrary to, the testimony of Scripture. We maintain that the seventieth week of the prophecy occurred just where we would expect to find the seventieth number of any

series, and that is next after the sixty-ninth; or, in other words, that the seventieth actual or historical week was also the prophetic week.

"Never since the world began has a described and 'determined' measure of time, expressed in the way always used for that purpose (that is, by stating the number of time-units making up the complete measure), been treated according to the view we are now discussing. Never has a specified number of time-units, making up a described stretch of time, been taken to mean anything but continuous or consecutive."—Ib., pages 93, 94.

And so futurism finds it necessary to introduce unheard-of things—special rules of interpretations to establish its claims.

Though futurism says otherwise, the church is seen on earth during all the time between Revelation 4 and Revelation 19. It is true that those who were resurrected at the time of Christ's glorious resurrection and who ascended with Him, are seen in the heavenly courts. Compare Matt. 27: 50-53; Eph. 4: 8, margin; Rev. 4: 4, 10; 5: 8. The number of the elders (twenty-four) refers us back to the time when the high priest in the Jewish sanctuary—a type of the greater temple in heaven (Heb. 8: 1-5)—had twenty-four assistants with him at a time. See 1 Chron. 24: 4-18; 25: 31; Eze. 8: 16. The ones seen in the heavenly courts were a special number raised to assist Jesus, man's High Priest, in the temple above; they are not the entire church. The church is still seen on earth between Revelation 4 and 19, praying, and wrestling with the evil one. Compare Rev. 6: 9 with chapter 1: 9.

The church is to be seen preaching the gospel, and keeping the com-



mandments of God right down to the coming of Christ. Rev. 14: 6-14. That the threefold message of Rev. 14: 6-14 is to go to all the world *now* before the coming of Christ, is evident from verse 14, and also because those who heed this message are coupled with those who have come up in the first resurrection at the coming of Christ and reign with Christ during the 1,000 years which begin at the coming of Christ. Rev. 20: 4, 5; 1 Thess. 4: 16-18. Therefore futurism is again wrong in saying that these messages are to be given after the church is taken away at the first resurrection and the second advent.

This list of objections to futurism could be greatly extended. A system of interpretation which is so contrary to the general Bible principles of explaining itself, which has a separate set of rules to accommodate itself, and which opposes the foundation of

the great God-sent Reformation, did not originate in heaven, but in the mind of the great adversary of souls, the enemy of God and man.

Dear reader, hitherto you may have believed in futurism, thinking it to be undefiled Protestantism. I would ask you, therefore, to take these lines as an appeal to come back to the belief of our godly, spiritual forefathers. I have been attacking an "ism," not those who hold it. I contend with futurism, but not futurists. Many of God's gems have been ensnared in it, but the time has come for eyes blinded by futurism to be opened to the fact that God's great message is now going to the world.

May this little pamphlet be blessed by Him "who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son." Amen.